

# Public Document Pack

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4 January 2022

## **Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee**

A virtual meeting of the Committee will be held at **10.30 am** on **Wednesday, 12 January 2022**.

**Note:** In response to the continuing public health measures, this meeting will be held virtually with members in remote attendance. Public access is via webcasting.

**The meeting will be available to watch live via the Internet at this address:**

<http://www.westsussex.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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### **Agenda**

- 10.31 am     1.     **Declarations of Interests**
- Members and officers must declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any business on the agenda. They should also make declarations at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting. Consideration should be given to leaving the meeting if the nature of the interest warrants it. If in doubt please contact Democratic Services before the meeting.
- 10.32 am     2.     **Urgent Matters**
- Items not on the agenda which the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances, including cases where the Committee needs to be informed of budgetary or performance issues affecting matters within its terms of reference, which have emerged since the publication of the agenda.
- 10.33 am     3.     **Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee** (Pages 5 - 12)
- The Committee is asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021 (cream paper).

- 10.38 am 4. **Responses to Recommendations** (To Follow)
- The Committee is asked to note the responses to recommendations made at the 1 December 2021 meeting.
- 10.43 am 5. **Achievement and Attainment of Children in West Sussex** (Pages 13 - 28)
- Report by Director of Education and Skills.
- The report outlines the County Council's approach to attainment in West Sussex, and the plans and actions being taken to contribute to improving attainment levels for children.
- 11.58 am 6. **Children First Improvement Update - Children We Care For in West Sussex** (Pages 29 - 48)
- Report by the Executive Director of Children Young People and Learning.
- This item updates the Committee on the developments and progress made on the Children First programme since the Ofsted report in 2019. This report is focussed on Children We Care For in West Sussex.
- 12.43 pm 7. **Work Programme Planning and Possible Items for Future Scrutiny** (Pages 49 - 70)
- The Committee's work programme (Appendix A) and the Forward Plan entries relevant to its remit (Appendix B) are attached.
- The Committee is invited to review the work programme, enquire about any of the forthcoming decisions within its portfolio and raise any items for possible future scrutiny.
- 12.48 pm 8. **Requests for Call-In**
- There have been no requests for call-in to the Scrutiny Committee within its constitutional remit since the date of the last meeting. The Director of Law and Assurance will report any requests since the publication of the agenda papers.
- 12.53 pm 9. **Date of Next Meeting**
- The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 9 March 2022 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester. Probable agenda items include:
- Children First Improvement Update – Foster Service Redesign Phase 2
  - Performance and Resources Report Quarter 3
- Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda for the

meeting must notify the Director of Law and Assurance by 25 February 2022.

**To all members of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee**

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## **Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee**

1 December 2021 – At a meeting of the Committee held at County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.

Present: Cllr Hillier (Chairman)

Cllr Linehan  
Cllr Baldwin  
Cllr Bennett  
Cllr Charles

Cllr Cherry  
Cllr Cornell  
Cllr Mercer  
Cllr Smith

Cllr Sparkes  
Mr Lozzi  
Mrs Ryan

Apologies were received from Cllr Burgess, Cllr Hall, Mrs Hill and Mr Cristin

Also in attendance: Cllr N Jupp and Cllr Russell, Mr Collins and Mr Ryder from the Youth Cabinet.

### **28. Declarations of Interests**

28.1 In accordance with the County Council's code of conduct, the following declarations of interest were made:

- Cllr Smith declared a personal interest as the parent of a child who uses school transport and has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Cllr Mercer declared a personal interest as the Chair of the Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust.

### **29. Urgent Matters**

29.1 No urgent matters were raised.

### **30. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee**

30.1 Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

30.2 Committee members asked what progress had been made on children's mental health and emotional wellbeing as there was concern that it fell between two scrutiny committees. The Chairman reported that a written briefing would come to all Members and there was hope for Member Development session. The Chairman asked that any specific points to be included be raised with himself. The briefing was welcomed, and Members suggested that information broken down across areas and details on who to contact when a situation arises would be useful.

### **31. Responses to Recommendations**

31.1 The Committee welcomed the response to the recommendations made by the Committee at the meeting on 29 September 2021 and the information they contained.

31.2 A Committee Member highlighted that midwifery services were leaving The Gattons in Burgess Hill and asked if that was an indicator of what was happening across other Children and Family Centres that were closing. Cllr Russell responded that the County Council were not obliged to provide space for midwifery services but agreed to take the matter back to the Assets team to see if assistance could be given in signposting them to accommodation nearby.

31.3 Committee Members recognised the importance of the procurement of a new IT system across Early Help, Social Care and Education. Officers reported that the Contract would be awarded in January 2022 with work starting March/April time and taking about twelve months. **Action:** The Children First Transformation Director agreed to provide a short written briefing to members on the procurement process and to update them regularly during the life of the project.

## **32. Children First Improvement Update - Quality Assurance**

32.1 The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Cllr Russell, introduced the item reporting that the paper outlined the quality assurance path the service had taken on the journey of improvement thus far.

32.2 The Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning, Mrs Butler, reported that when she joined the County Council in 2020 audit had not been in the lifeblood of the service. She was pleased with the progress made to date, recognising the service was on a continued journey of improvement.

32.3 The Assistant Director – Safeguarding Quality and Assurance, Ms Steele, reported that the quality assurance team had worked with operational services to introduce several changes to ensure audits were undertaken and the pace of that work had been significant. The Quality Assurance Framework had been outgrown and work was in progress to produce another version for the future.

32.4 The improvements shown in the report reflected a high return rate of completed audits. The quality of the audits had been improved which in turn had improved quality of practices. It was important to have a timely response to actions resulting from audits and a relaunched practice standards document had been issued to social workers.

32.1 Members of the Committee asked questions and a summary of those questions and answers follows:

- How does the quality assurance framework **recognise increased pressures on managers** undertaking audits?  
Ms Steele reported that due to the reduction in the number of audits, in order to focus on quality and the number of managers involved, the audit rate was quite low, around one audit per manager per month. Audit was now considered as business as usual rather than an additional pressure.

- The **Power BI dashboard** would enable the service to track actions, identify patterns and trends for further research. It would also highlight good practice.
- The service was working with the Complaints Team to address better responses at Stage One of the **complaints** process. It was hoped this work and that as the quality of practice improved a reduction would be seen in the number of complaints. The service was also being encouraged to promote compliments received.
- **Voice of the Child** – Quarter two showed a drop in the number of children contributing to their review and this was of concern. Ms Steele reported that a drive was in progress to improve this. The recent restructure of the Independent Reviewing Officers and Child Protection Advisor teams included training to ensure the voice of child was captured at reviews and child protection cases. The voice of the child and families would form part of the audit process from January 2022 to seek and use their views.
- The Assistant Director – Corporate Parenting told the group about work with the **Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP)** which now involved young people. The Children in Care Council (CiCC) now has a Chair, Vice-Chair and six ambassadors. The CiCC Chair co-chairs the CPP with Cllr Russell. Young people are involved in the setting the agenda for CPP meetings. There are sub-groups which involve the ambassadors, officers and elected members.
- **Mind of My Own app (MOMO)** – This is an interactive smart app which allowed young people to express their views, wishes and feelings at any point. **Action:** Assistant Director – Corporate Parenting agreed to provide a short briefing for committee members on the MOMO app and how it is being used.
- Whilst it was good for the Committee to hear the good news stories, were they really getting an opportunity to **focus on problem areas**? The Committee were reminded that the service was also routinely monitored by Ofsted, the Commissioner as well as regular self-evaluations. The self-evaluations prior to Ofsted visits usually mirrored the Ofsted findings, giving the service confidence they were not showing things better than they actually were. The Committee were reminded that the County Council had never had a Children Social Care service rated as good so it would be a long journey and it was preferred that journey was slower, deeper and more sustaining. It was hoped the monitoring visits in 2022 would show significant changes now that good foundations had been laid.
- **Governance** - A Committee member raised that the scrutiny committee should be listed in the quality assurance framework as part of the governance role to support and challenge.

**Action:** The Assistant Director - Safeguarding Quality and Assurance agreed to ensure this was added in.

32.6 Resolved – That the Committee:

1. Welcomes the progress, hard work and successful outcomes made on quality assurance to date and recognises the importance of audit to demonstrate the quality of practice. The Committee would like to have a further update in the future on audit outcomes to a future meeting, to include an update on the contribution of children to their reviews and how the voice of the child and families is being sought and used in the audit process. The Committee's BPG will work with the service to identify a suitable timescale.
2. Asks that the Scrutiny Committee is referenced as part of the governance structure within the Quality Assurance Framework.

### **33. Performance and Resources Report - Quarter 2**

33.1 The Committee examined the Performance and Resources report (PRR), which set out the Council's corporate performance, finance and savings delivery and business performance for the services within the remit of this Committee from July to end of September 2021.

#### **Children and Young People**

33.2 The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Cllr Russell, introduced the item reporting that the financial position was improved from quarter one. There were still some costly external placement fees to work on and there had been an increase in interest in foster service applications.

33.3 Members of the Committee asked questions and a summary of those questions and answers follows:

- **Rereferrals** – The table on page 43 showed an increase in rereferrals to Children's Social Care within 12 months compared to the quarter one report. It was advised that this had been caused by a reporting error which had been addressed. The correct rate was slightly above average at 23%, which was in line with other local authorities and the English average.
- **Contacts** – A piece of work had been undertaken on contact enquiries which had showed re-contact rates were very low.
- **Stability of children looked after placements** – The Assistant Director – Corporate Parenting reported that this was at the forefront for the service now. The County Council has two outstanding rated homes specialising in higher complexity or need, and a third reopening shortly. The service had seen some external placements returning to in-county provision. Work was ongoing with providers and also looking into whether appropriate foster placements could be used.



- **Staffing vacancies** – There was no financial target to have less staff and it was intended that the staffing budget would be fully spent. The Covid pandemic had been a challenge in trying to achieve a full complement of permanent staff. This had meant agency staff had still been employed, however some had transferred from agencies into permanent positions. Additionally, internal training meant the County Council were growing our own professionals. **Action:** The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People agreed to give members a briefing report on “growing our own” work.

## Learning and Skills

33.4 The Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills, Cllr Nigel Jupp, introduced the item for Learning and Skills and highlighted that the quarter two from July to September had very little time when the schools were fully functioning due to the school holidays.

33.5 Members of the Committee asked questions and a summary of those questions and answers follows:

- **Transport of Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** – Parents of children with EHCPs are made aware of the parental mileage rate offer and encouraged to transport their children to special schools and claim the mileage. The numbers doing so have doubled since 2020. Committee members were reassured that parents were also made aware of the scheme through social care teams and the EHCP process.
- **Dedicated Schools Grant** – The County Council is planning to manage the risk in part by increasing the number of places in special support centres in mainstream schools and increasing the number of places in special schools.
- **Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee School** – The project had been delayed due to the original contractor withdrawing. The retendering process had led to higher costs due to the increase in the price of building materials due to the pandemic. This had delayed the construction project.
- **EHCP Secondary School pilot** – The project started in the summer 2021 and focussed on individual year 6 primary school pupils with EHCPs to help children to transition into a mainstream secondary school. Once settled the existing secondary school provision would support pupils. Similarly, there was a scheme for pupils aged 16 years and over helping with transition from secondary school into further provision eg colleges.
- **Staffing Vacancies** – Funding is made available to schools for school crossing patrols but often schools don't take that up. Some vacancies have not been recruited to because the Education and Skills directorate is undertaking a redesign. With the direct Government reducing grant for central block activities,

which the County Council uses to support statutory responsibilities, savings must be made.

33.6 Resolved – That the Committee:

1. Welcomes the format and information contained in the PRR and agreed it was a useful tool to carry out scrutiny of the Council's Performance and Financial Position.
2. Welcomes the services focus and ambition around Performance Measure 1 (Percentage of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within 12 months of the previous referral) recognising it is an important indicator to measure the quality of service provided to children and young people.
3. Would like to see how the option for parents to claim mileage to provide home to school transport for their children could be further promoted and agreed to explore with the service how Members can assist to promote this to parents.
4. Thanks those working together to help address the financial pressures and risks in the Learning and Skills Portfolio, which are primarily due to the increase in EHCPs, and supports the work being taken forward to increase capacity of WSCC SEND placements. The Committee welcomes that the Special Support Centres are being progressed as a priority as part of this.

**34. Work Programme Planning and Possible items for Future Scrutiny**

34.1 The Committee agreed the draft work programme prepared by the Business Planning Group.

34.2 The Committee were updated that the Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group for Needs Assessments and EHCPs – Process, Practice and Delivery, were almost finalised and that they would be shared with the Business Planning Group, who would also look at dates/timings.

34.3 A Committee Member asked if the Christmas Holiday Activity Fund providers were in place and asked if Members could be made aware of the providers and activities in their area. **Action:** The Director of Education and Skills confirmed the providers were in place agreed circulate a list to Members. He also informed the meeting that funding had also been found to offer a similar week in the February half term holiday.

**35. Requests for Call-In**

35.1 There had been no request for call-into the Scrutiny Committee within its constitutional remit since the date of the last meeting.

**36. Date of Next Meeting**

36.1 The next meeting would be held on 12 January 2022 at 10.30am.

The meeting ended at 12.58 pm

Chairman

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<b>Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee</b>
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<b>12 January 2022</b>
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<b>Achievement and Attainment of Children in West Sussex</b>
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<b>Report by the Director of Education and Skills</b>
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## **Summary**

Securing high achievement for all children and young people is essential in supporting them in developing the skills and knowledge they need to be successful and active citizens in society. Securing high achievement is within the power of schools and teachers but also is reliant on having the appropriate resources to meet the needs of pupils, along with a clarity of direction, policy and expectations set nationally by government. The local authority's statutory role and responsibilities in education are set out in the Education Act 1996. Whilst the local authority has a responsibility to promote high standards, its role in direct delivery and intervention is more limited.

Standards achieved by children and young people in West Sussex schools and Early Years settings are varied. There has been a history of underachievement in the primary sector based on the County's level of deprivation compared to the national average. The demographics across West Sussex are diverse with some areas of significant affluence and others of significant deprivation. Therefore, county wide averages mask the significant differences in levels of deprivation and rates of progress from individual pupils' starting points. Since 2016 there has been a significant improvement in outcomes across the primary school sector in West Sussex as measured by national test results but with much more that we need to achieve. Standards achieved by the time students reach GCSEs have traditionally been more positive with students showing positive progress through their secondary education. Disadvantaged pupils on average in all phases do not achieve as well as their non-disadvantaged peers.

During 2020 and 2021 education and learning has been interrupted for many due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Research suggests that, during this time, some students have fallen behind in their learning. However, the significance of the learning gap that is perceived to exist is unclear due to the cancelling of national testing and examinations over the two years. No national or local data exists that can quantify the detail of impact on learning caused by the pandemic.

This report aims to outline what we do know about the attainment and outcomes of our pupils and students on the lead up to the pandemic, and also what information and perceptions exist on how children have been performing during the two years of the pandemic. It also aims to draw together actions that have been undertaken by the local authority to support schools in focusing their attention on securing effective learning for all children and future plans of the local authority within its statutory role to maintain a focus on learning.

### **The focus for scrutiny**

The Committee is asked to consider the attainment and achievement of children across West Sussex, the County Council's approach to addressing the attainment gap (within its statutory responsibilities), and if the plans and actions being taken are designed to contribute to championing high achievement for all children.

Key areas for scrutiny include:

- a) To identify any areas the Committee wishes to highlight to the Cabinet Member for consideration as part of the development of the Education and Skills Strategy to ensure the County Council is championing high achievement for all children, including any implications from Covid-19.
- b) To identify if there are any areas that the Committee may wish to consider for future scrutiny.

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

## **1. Background and Context**

- 1.1 The role of a local authority with respect of education is detailed in the Education Act 1996. Whilst a local authority has a responsibility to promote high standards for all pupils and promote the fulfilment of the learning potential for all, its powers and duties surrounding pupil outcomes are limited. Schools have the responsibility for ensuring that all children achieve well and the local authority has the power to intervene only where schools are causing concern and children's education and learning is at risk. These powers are covered by the National Schools Causing Concern protocol and only relate to maintained schools. With respect to assessment, a local authority's responsibilities are restricted to ensuring that the national assessment process is implemented and that a sample of teacher assessments at the end of key stage national assessments are moderated.
- 1.2 Over the period 2016-2019, the attainment of children in West Sussex provided for a mixed picture across the county's schools. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development (GLD) by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (at the end of Reception class), had been almost in line with the national average each year. For children reaching the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and in mathematics had improved over that period and was in line with the national average in 2019, although the proportion achieving greater depth and above the expected standard was below. Whilst the results of the end of Key Stage 2 outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics showed good progress towards the national average between 2016-2019, they were still below the national average by 2019 in writing and mathematics. Key Stage 2 reading standards were in line with the national average in 2019 with respect to the proportion achieving the national standard, and above the national average in the proportion of children reading with greater depth and exceeding the national standard. However, where progress at Key Stage 2 had been significant over the three years, this is measured from a low baseline in 2016. The county's Key Stage 2 results,

based on the proportion of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, was below the national average and ranked 116 out of 151 local authorities in England by 2019. Outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4, based on Attainment 8 scores, the measure used to standardise and provide comparative performance data for 16 year olds at GCSE, were higher in West Sussex than the national average throughout the period leading up to 2019, with the local authority being ranked 56 out of 151 local authorities in England. At all key stages, and beginning before children enter school, the disparity in the outcomes of disadvantaged children with their non-disadvantaged peers is not insignificant and are below that of disadvantaged children nationally and across the region.

- 1.3 In 2020, due to the covid pandemic, national tests and examinations were cancelled and this cancellation has continued through 2021. No key stage assessments at Key Stages 1 and 2 were moderated and schools were not mandated to submit any pupil performance data to the Department of Education or to the local authority. There is no pupil performance data on academic outcomes in reading, writing or mathematics at Key Stage 1 or 2 for either year. At GCSE and A level, contingency arrangements were introduced, initially using a standard algorithm to award grades but subsequently requiring assessment centres and schools to submit locally assessed and teacher assessed grades. Whilst public data is available on GCSE and A level outcomes for 2020 and 2021, these are not being used by the Department of Education to compare school performance, or to compare performance generally with previous years' results where examinations were undertaken formally.
- 1.4 At the beginning of the academic year 2019, Ofsted also introduced a new inspection framework to guide its inspections of schools. Under this framework, schools were to be evaluated on the quality of provision and achievement across the curriculum, with the explicit judgement of a school's outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics being removed. This reflected Ofsted's view that too heavy a focus on data and achieving national test outcomes was diverting schools from the real substance of education, and that teaching to the test was risking narrowing the curriculum with the most negative impact potentially being felt by disadvantaged and the least able. Since introducing the new inspection framework, Ofsted inspectors have been encouraged not to look at schools' internal data to judge achievement and standards, but to observe children's learning and outcomes in lessons and through the scrutiny of their work. Whilst the inspection of schools was paused in April 2020, since September 2021 inspections have been re-introduced. However, due to the nature of the new inspection framework, and the lack of authentic examination and test data, there is limited moderated or verified information available on the academic performance in reading, writing or mathematics either nationally or through the inspection of local schools since Ofsted evaluative inspections restarted in September 2021. Ofsted undertook a survey during the period of Covid which included interviews with a sample of headteachers and some sampling of provision. The outcomes report (Covid 19: Briefing on Schools) indicated that children who were hardest hit by school closures and restrictions had regressed in some basic skills and learning. The report suggested that some older children had lost stamina in their reading and writing along with physical fitness, whilst others were showing signs of mental distress including an increase in eating disorders and self-harm.

**2. Academic Performance and attainment in the Foundation Stage and Primary Phase**

2.1 The last publicly captured data indicated that the proportion of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage reaching a good level of development by the age of 5 was in line with the national average. This had been so over the three years prior to the covid pandemic.

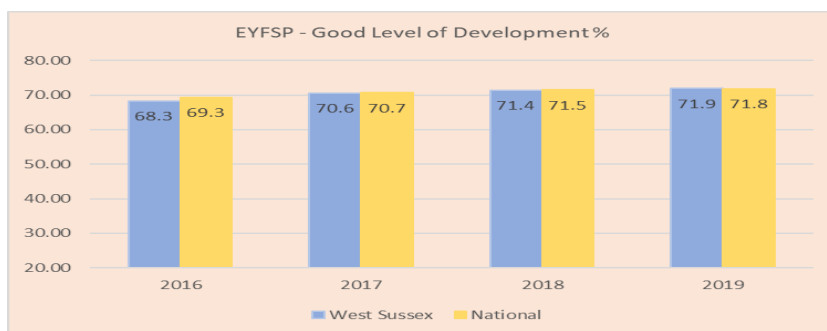


Table 1: Proportion of 5 yr olds reaching a GLD at the end of the Foundation Stage

However, on an average point score, the local authority ranked 109 out of 151 local authorities, reflecting the already significant discrepancy in the outcomes of our disadvantaged young children, with data on school readiness using the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY) model indicating that whilst 71.4% of West Sussex 5 year olds have the health, emotional maturity and skills required to successfully settle into school, in line with the national average, only 52% of disadvantaged young children in West Sussex are similarly ready. This indicates a difference to both the national and regional averages of 57%. Already, as our children reach statutory school age, the discrepancy between our disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children is greater than that in neighbouring local authorities.

**Early Years**

2.2 A key strategy to close the gap that exists, is to ensure that those entitled to free early years provision and childcare at the age of 2 years take up the provision and those entitled to extended hours for 3 and 4 years olds similarly access the provision available for them. Whilst take up of Free Entitlement in the Early Years has fallen nationally and in West Sussex during the period of Covid-19, the take up of Free 2 year old places and 3 and 4 year old additional hours in West Sussex has remained higher than the national average.

Table 2: Percentage take up of Two Year Old Free Entitlement

	2018	2019	2020	2021
England	72%	68%	69%	62%
West Sussex	80%	87%	84%	76%



Table 3: Percentage take up of 3 and 4 year old additional free hours of education and childcare

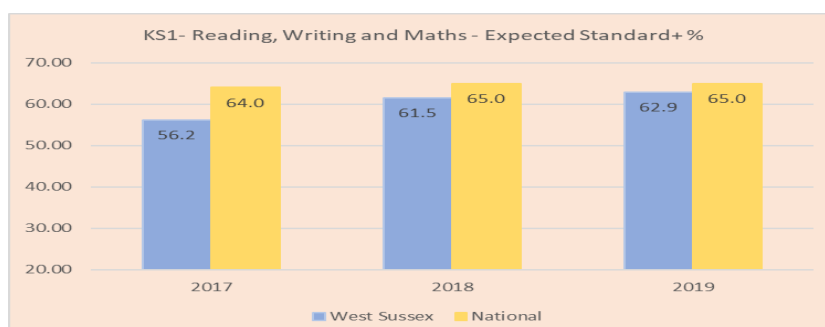
	2018	2019	2020	2021
England	94%	93%	93%	90%
West Sussex	95%	95%	94%	93%

- 2.3 Additional actions are being implemented by the local authority to address issues of school readiness, and to reduce the challenges of transition for children who neither have the skills or emotional readiness to integrate and settle into school. These actions are core to addressing some of the challenges facing children who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs.
- 2.4 Additional funding has been agreed with schools through the Area Inclusion and Improvement Boards (AIIBs) to fund an early years project on disadvantage to engage early years practitioners in our independent settings alongside Foundation Stage teachers in schools. The aim is to identify and share best practice in provision and learning to ensure smooth transition and the early identification of additional need. The West Sussex Schools Forum, a representative body from schools responsible for agreeing the use of the dedicated schools grant provided by the government, recently agreed to transfer £1.2m from the schools’ grant into the High Needs Funding Block, a significant proportion of which is to pay for the local authority to employ additional staff to focus on early identification of SEND in the early years and to support transition. This is to ensure that children with additional needs are diagnosed and supported through their transition into appropriate mainstream school placements, thereby reducing the risk of underachievement and potential exclusion.

**Key Stage One**

- 2.5 Schools have had no nationally validated data for the end of Key Stage 1 since 2019 and have not been required to submit any data on pupil performance at the age of 7 years since that time. West Sussex performance in Key Stage 1 had been improving year on year between 2016-2019. By 2019, the proportion of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 was broadly in line with the national average and with the local authority’s results ranked 106 out of 151 local authorities, but higher in reading.

Table 4: Key Stage 1 results for the period 2017-2019



- 2.6 Although there has been no requirement to report end of Key Stage 1 data to the Department for Education or the local authority during the period of Covid, schools have been required to submit the results of their Year 2 phonic screening tests to the local authority, these being submitted by January each year. The figures for 2021 are not yet available but figures for 2020 indicate an increase in both boys and girls achieving the expected level of phonic knowledge by the end of year 2 compared with that of previous years. It also reflects improvement in the progress made in Year 2 where traditionally, a significant proportion of those not achieving the phonic knowledge in Year 1 have failed to reach the required standard by the end of Year 2.

Table 5: Phonic Screening Test data 2017 - 2020

		2017		2018		2019		2020	
		year 1	year 2	year 1	year 2	year 1	year 2	year 1	year 2
Working at the required standard	All pupils	79.7%	63.2%	81.7%	61.7%	80.8%	56.7%		79.7%
	Boys	76.1%	59.8%	78.3%	60.7%	77.6%	54.1%		76.7%
	Girls	83.6%	68.3%	85.2%	63.2%	84.4%	60.6%		83.1%
Working towards the required standard	All pupils	18.9%	32.0%	17.2%	33.9%	18.1%	38.7%		17.9%
	Boys	22.2%	34.2%	20.1%	34.4%	21.1%	40.0%		20.2%
	Girls	15.5%	28.7%	14.2%	33.1%	14.8%	36.8%		15.4%

- 2.7 Anecdotal evidence of the impact of Covid-19 on the achievement of children in Key Stage 1 was captured through a local survey of primary schools across West Sussex during October 2021 covering all Districts and Boroughs. Of those responding to the survey, feedback suggested that by the end of the academic year 2020-21 only 27% of pupils in Year 2 were felt to be at the level they were expected to be in reading; with only 5% in writing; and 20% in mathematics. With respect to disadvantaged pupils, schools responding to the survey indicated a view that only 18% were working at the level they had expected in reading; with 7% in writing; and 10% in mathematics. This potentially reflects the government’s guidance during the pandemic that priority was given for face to face teaching in Key Stage 1 to younger children rather than those in Year 2.

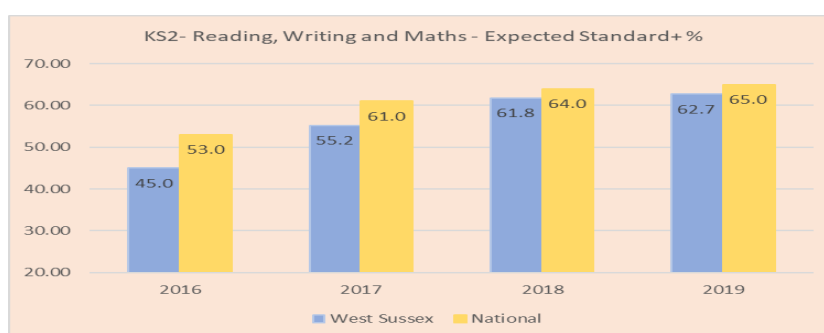
### Key Stage Two

- 2.8 There have been no national tests at Key Stage 2 throughout the pandemic with the last formally assessed and moderated results being those for 2019. Internal school data and assessment is for teachers’ use to inform their next steps in planning learning for pupils. Ofsted make the point of not looking at schools’ internal data during inspections. It is therefore not possible for the local authority or for the Department for Education to provide an accurate and detailed analysis of the attainment and progress made by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics through their primary education over the last two years, or how pupils have performed at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2020 or 2021. Analysis of the most recent published information and trends through to 2019 can provide an understanding of strengths and weaknesses at the time. More recent information the local authority holds on both school attendance through the pandemic, along with discussions with school leaders on their own perceptions of how pupils have coped educationally during the

pandemic, can provide a qualitative rather than quantitative analysis of the current situation.

- 2.9 Learning outcomes for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have been traditionally low and much lower than ought to be expected. From a low base in 2016, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics have improved significantly in closing the gap with the national average. However, due to the relatively low levels of deprivation across the county as a whole, attainment ought to be higher. In 2019, the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average and ranked 116 out of 151 local authorities. Whilst attainment in reading was in line with the national average for the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard, and above for the proportion reading with greater depth and exceeding the expected standard, it was below in writing and in mathematics.

Table 6: Key Stage 2 results 2016-2019



- 2.10 The attainment gap at the end of Key Stage 2 between disadvantaged pupils in West Sussex and their non-disadvantaged peers, based on the proportion achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is a key performance indicator within Our Council Plan 2021 – 2025. In 2019 the percentage was reported at 26% compared with a difference nationally of 19%. However, this gap varies across the county with some areas of the county being close to the national gap and others being well above. Whilst the differential was reducing in West Sussex at a faster rate than it was nationally, there was still more action needed. For Children in Need and those with care plans, attainment had risen significantly since 2016 with overall outcomes being higher in West Sussex than those achieved nationally by Children in Need, with the local authority ranked 61 out of 151 local authorities for its attainment among the vulnerable and children in need.

### Impact of Covid

- 2.11 During the Covid pandemic, West Sussex schools and academies have maintained strong face to face teaching with higher levels of pupil attendance than nationally throughout the pandemic. This has been a particular feature for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils where, for most of the pandemic, school attendance has exceeded that of schools nationally and of our regional neighbours. For our children in care, throughout the pandemic when schools were not in partial lockdown, attendance has almost always been at or above 90%.
- 2.12 A local survey of primary schools was conducted across West Sussex during October 2021 covering all Districts and Boroughs. Of those who responded, it

was suggested that by the end of the academic year 2020-21, nearly 58% of pupils in Year 6 were felt to be at least at the level they expected pupils to attain in reading; 66% were felt to be at least at the levels they expected in writing; with 45% in mathematics. With respect to disadvantaged pupils, schools responding to the survey indicated a view that only 37% were working at the level they had expected in reading; with 27% in writing; and 30% in mathematics.

- 2.13 Whilst surveys are open to interpretation and can be subjective, the results would indicate that, from the perspective of primary schools, it is younger pupils who have been most affected in their learning through covid, particularly younger disadvantaged pupils. Whilst a significant minority of older pupils in primary schools were not at the levels teachers would have expected them to achieve based on previous knowledge and information held on their performance prior to covid, far more were achieving the levels they would have expected. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils falling behind the levels teachers were expecting of them were lower than that of younger children in Key Stage 1. This reflects the disruptive year in schools during 2020, along with the limited access to a full and broad practical curriculum in Key Stage 1 due to covid restrictions. It also reflects the prioritisation for face to face teaching children in Year 6 and along with the disadvantaged to prepare for their transition to secondary education. The local survey would reflect some of the findings of the Ofsted surveys undertaken nationally during 2020.
- 2.14 The local authority has focused its resources through the pandemic to keep schools open and to ensure that our most vulnerable children were able to access face to face teaching wherever possible. Throughout the pandemic, the local authority's link advisers have maintained regular contact with schools. Regular communication and the sharing of guidance, for example on planning virtual learning, assessing progress, and managing learning and safeguarding in schools. This aimed to keep schools open and provide detail on ideas and support mechanisms available to them.
- 2.15 During 2020 and 2021, the local authority has distributed over 1,600 laptop computers and mobile data packages to schools to support children accessing learning virtually. Funded by the Department for Education, and primarily targeted at secondary schools, West Sussex was able to make a significant number available to support disadvantaged pupils in primary schools. Significant professional development has been provided for schools around curriculum and early reading development to ensure that schools have access to the guidance and professional development they need in these areas through the pandemic.

### **Turning the Tide Initiative**

- 2.16 In 2019, the local authority launched a major initiative 'Turning the Tide', focusing on improving teaching and learning and leadership in raising the achievement of disadvantaged children. Working in partnership with schools and the Durrington Research School in Worthing, 30 primary schools were chosen to take part, based on the disparity in outcomes between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils from national test data. The project involved professional development for senior staff and additional consultancy support provided by the Research School's Evidence Leads, comprising of senior teachers and practitioners in schools across Sussex and

Surrey. A further tranche of schools has been included into the project in the second year and, to date, 113 primary schools and academies have been engaged in the programme of training which has included training for leaders of disadvantaged learners, the use of evidence in developing a strategy for tackling disadvantaged underachievement, and attendance at a forum for Disadvantaged Leads in each school. Although quantifiable outcome data is absent due to the pausing of national tests for 7 and 11 year olds in 2020 and 2021, the project was reviewed in 2021 prior to a further extension. Feedback from schools on the evaluation indicates action and an improved whole school focus on tackling underachievement of disadvantaged pupils.

### 3. Academic performance and attainment in Secondary Schools

#### Key Stage Four

3.1 Although GCSEs have been awarded in 2020 and 2021, the basis upon which such awards have been made have been significantly different to that of previous years due to changes in the examinations and the assessment process through the pandemic.

Table 7: Key Stage 4 Progress 8 data for West Sussex Schools 2016-2019 (A school's Progress 8 score is usually between -1 and +1. A score of +1 means that pupils in that school achieve one grade higher in each qualification than other similar pupils nationally. A score of -1 means they achieve one grade lower. The average Progress 8 score of all secondary schools nationally is 0)

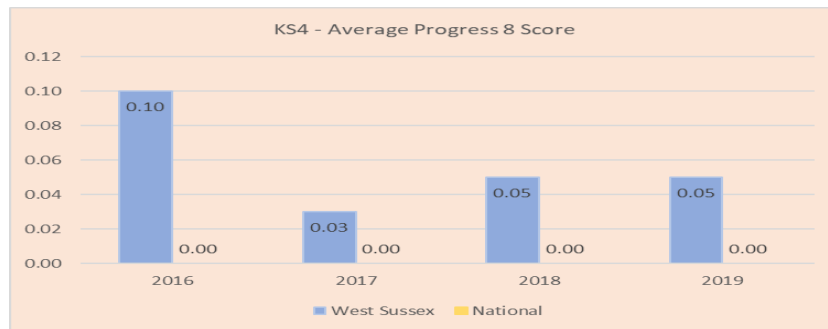
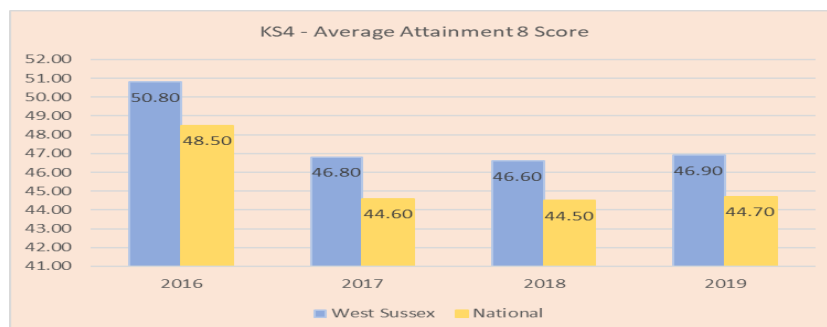
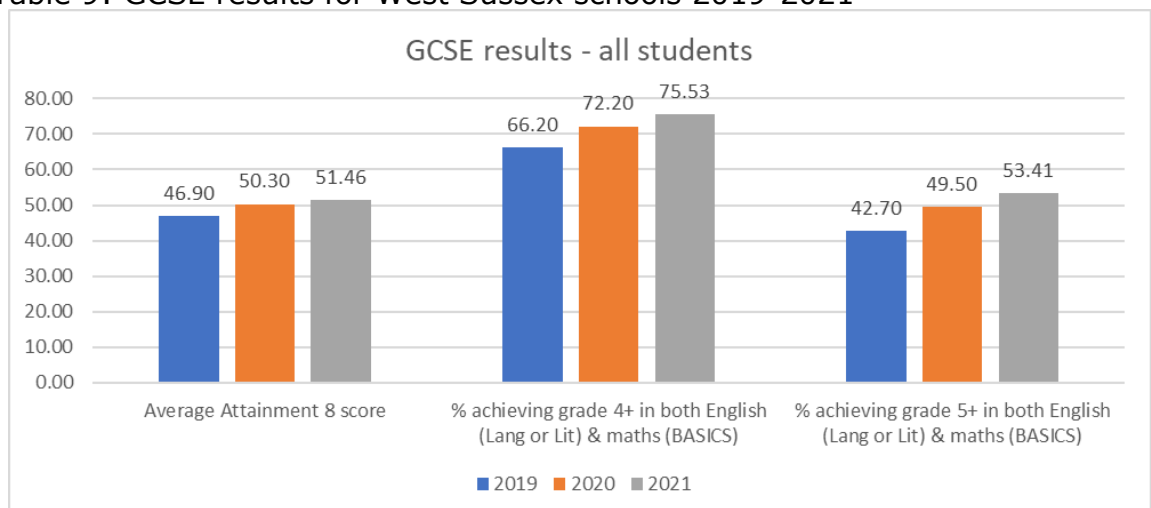


Table 8: Key Stage 4 Attainment 8 data for West Sussex Schools 2016-2019 (Attainment 8 measures the achievement of a pupil across 8 qualifications including mathematics (double weighted) and English (double weighted), 3 further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) measure and 3 further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications)



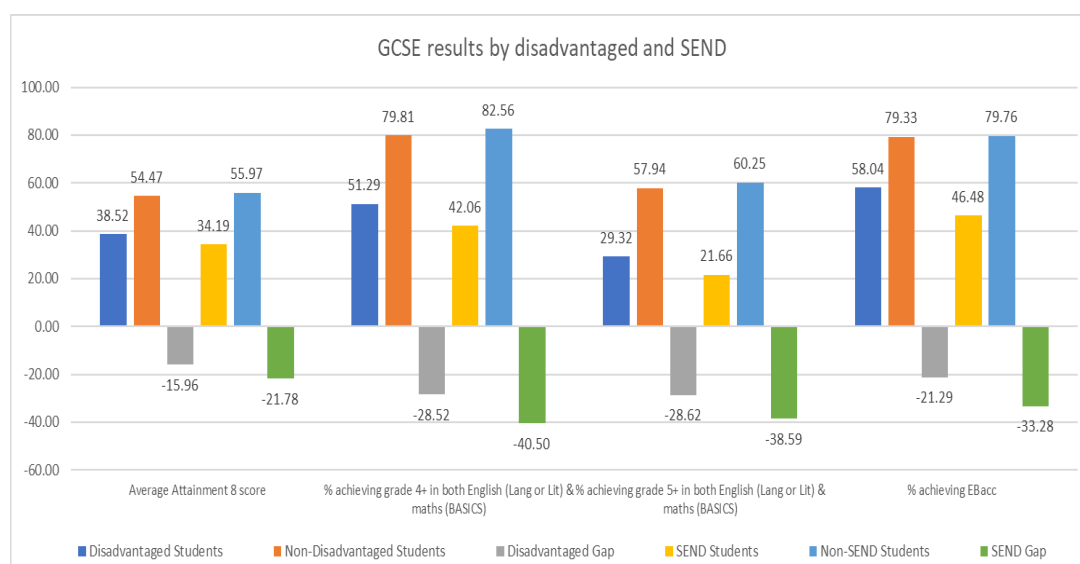
- 3.2 Across all national measures at GCSE and English Baccalaureate, West Sussex secondary schools have achieved well and above the national average over the period 2016-2019. Value added seen through Progress 8 scores saw West Sussex ranked 46 out of 151 local authorities. The average Attainment 8 score for those Children in Need was above the national average for Children in Need in 2019. It was above the national average for those Children in Need achieving a Grade 5 or above in English and mathematics and was well above average for those Children in Need achieving a Grade 4c or above in the English Baccalaureate, where West Sussex was ranked 28 out of 151 local authorities in England.
- 3.3 Although overall attainment measures at Key Stage 4 show a positive picture in GCSE and associated examinations, the differential progress and achievement of disadvantaged students against their non-disadvantaged peers continued the pattern seen in primary schools, albeit to a lesser extent. Where the national gap in Attainment 8 scores between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students runs at -13.6, in West Sussex, the gap is slightly wider at -16.24.
- 3.4 GCSE results in 2020 were initially awarded through the use of a national algorithm and this led to significant challenges from schools and the sector. The Department for Education subsequently altered the mechanism used to determine grades with much greater emphasis being given to teacher assessments to determine outcomes. This change saw a significant improvement in Key Stage 4 outcomes in West Sussex with almost a 10% increase on the previous results for standard pass GCSEs, Grade 9-4, and a 9.5% increase for a strong pass. In 2020, the average Attainment 8 score at Key Stage 4, including English and mathematics was 50.3 compared with 46.9 in 2019, a rise of 5.4 overall.
- 3.5 GCSE results in 2021 were awarded using a different methodology to that in 2020 and 2019's examinations. West Sussex saw a further rise in outcomes covering average Attainment 8 measures both at standard and strong pass GCSE grades including English and mathematics. As the 2020 and 2021 results not comparable to previous results or between schools due to the way in which the assessments and awards took place, there are no national comparative figures of substance.

Table 9: GCSE results for West Sussex schools 2019-2021



3.6 Although there are significant limitations in making comparisons between results over the pandemic, when considering students who are disadvantaged or who have SEND, the gaps compared to the last examination results in 2019 show a narrowing of the gap between students who are disadvantaged or who have SEND with that of all students using the Attainment 8 measure including a standard Grade 4 pass in English and mathematics. For Grade 5 and above however, the gap has widened. It has been suggested by schools that this is the result of the pandemic suppressing the outcomes for those pupils who may have achieved a higher grade under a normal year. The return to formal examinations in 2022 may provide for a re-calibration of standards at the end of Key Stage 4 with more comparative analysis of standards against those achieved during the years prior to the pandemic. It is difficult at this stage to predict how this will work considering how examination syllabi covers two academic years and most students will have had disrupted learning in at least one of those years, missing elements of the syllabus expected to be covered. It may be further affected should additional covid measures have to be re-introduced into schools in 2022.

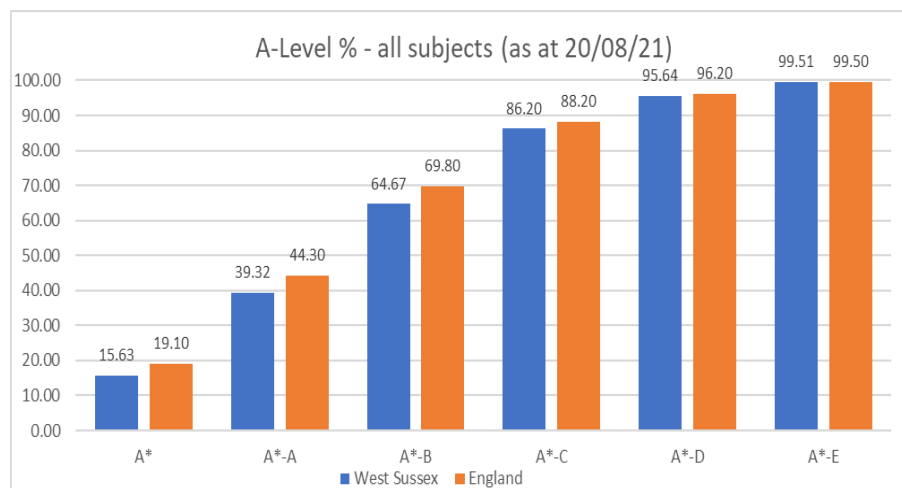
Table 10: 2021 GCSE data showing the gap between all students and those who are disadvantaged or who have SEND



### A Level

3.7 Performance data at A level available to the local authority reflects only those students who have studied A levels in the County’s school sixth forms. It does not include data on those West Sussex students who have undertaken their post 16 courses at either FE colleges or the 6<sup>th</sup> Form College in Horsham, or those who have travelled out of county to complete their post 16 courses in 6<sup>th</sup> Form Colleges or independent schools elsewhere. For those who have studied in West Sussex schools, A level results remain in line with those achieved nationally in 2021 albeit the proportion gaining the higher grades in 2021 was lower than that seen nationally.

Table 11: 2021 A level grades achieved in West Sussex school 6<sup>th</sup> Forms



3.8 During the period of Covid, West Sussex’s secondary schools have worked collaboratively to ensure that, as far as is possible, schools have remained open for face to face learning. The levels of attendance in secondary schools across West Sussex remained high throughout the pandemic and were the highest in England with attendance during the second half of the autumn term 2020 exceeding an average of 90%. Schools have made effective use of technology and the planning of lessons and interactions to run virtually alongside face to face teaching. Fourteen of the County’s secondary schools and academies have engaged with the local authority ‘Turning the Tide’ project on tackling the achievement gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged peers during the pandemic.

**4 Challenges to be overcome from Covid**

4.1 Covid has had a significant impact on schools and pupils. Nationally, it is being acknowledged that some children have fallen behind their trajectory of progress. In West Sussex, previous weaknesses in the achievement of disadvantaged children have been magnified and the perception of some headteachers is that the greatest impact has been on the youngest children. Ofsted acknowledges the challenge amongst the youngest learners who, without face to face teaching, have missed out on the learning of some of the basic skills and knowledge they need to successfully access the curriculum demands they face. Several research studies have similarly pointed to a loss of learning through the pandemic with [Mckinsey](#) suggesting that students could be up to 5 months behind in mathematics and 4 months in reading. The [OECD](#) suggests that while this potential learning loss may only be temporary, other elements that happen in the absence of traditional schooling, such as the curbing of educational aspirations or the disengagement from the school system, will have a long-term impact on students’ outcomes. [Ofqual](#) cites evidence from 10 studies suggesting that, when assessed during the autumn term of 2020, primary school pupils were generally a month or so behind expectations with disadvantaged primary school students being disproportionately behind. Research suggests some indication that primary school students were further behind expectations in mathematics than in reading and that younger primary school students were further behind expectations than older ones. The research also suggested that some older primary school students were actually ahead of expectations in reading.



- 4.2 Much of this research is difficult to quantify in relation to national standards and outcomes. This lack of quantifiable impact will remain until such times that the national tests and examinations are re-introduced or local authorities are given the mandate to moderate school and teacher led assessment.

## **5 Implications for the local authority**

- 5.1 The local authority, whilst having limited direct responsibility for accelerating the learning of pupils and students, does have a responsibility for championing the rights of all children to achieve as well as they can. This is driven through ambition, a strategy and influence. It is not driven through direct delivery which is outside the statutory role and responsibility of a local authority.
- 5.2 Through our established strategies for [School Effectiveness 2018-22](#) and [SEND & Inclusion 2019-24](#), the local authority's ambition and influence is being implemented in targeted ways through training, support and intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people. By the end of the autumn term 2021, and following the reintroduction of Ofsted inspections of schools, the number of schools and children attending schools that are deemed good or outstanding has risen further from the 87.6% in March 2020 when Ofsted inspections were paused, and now sits at 88.39%. Almost 88% of children in West Sussex now attend schools and academies rated Good or Outstanding, the highest figure in over five years. Through our SEND & Inclusion Strategy, the local authority is sharing inclusion data and is challenging schools on performance and provision for particular groups of pupils including those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged or have SEND. The collaboration between the local authority, our schools and academies, and the Durrington Research School in tackling the teaching and leadership to close the disadvantaged gap will continue to challenge underachievement.
- 5.3 The local authority is about to embark on a major new strategy for Education and Skills to set the ambition and drive for education and learning to cover the next four years. Central within this will be to draw together existing strategies on the effectiveness of schools and both SEND & Inclusion, but also to set out a strategy for the Early Years, for tackling the barriers facing disadvantaged children, overcoming the challenges of transition, and securing skills and pathways into education, employment or training post 16. A key focus will be to reflect on the different challenges faced across the Districts and Boroughs, with a much greater oversight of the children's learning journey from birth through into adulthood. There is no doubt in the level of challenge we all face but also no doubt in the commitment of all those responsible for children in West Sussex, that this is a challenge that can only be addressed through collaboration and engaging together.

## **6. Resources**

- 6.1 The Council has provided the required and appropriate resources through the budget setting process for this part of the service.
- 6.2 In June 2020 the government announced a one-off universal £650 million catch-up premium for the 2020/21 academic year to ensure that schools had the support they needed to help all pupils make up for missed learning due

to COVID-19. Out of this national allocation £9.393m was allocated to all the schools within the county.

- 6.3 In February 2021, a further one-off £302m recovery premium for the 2021/22 academic year was also announced by the Department for Education. This grant is to be paid in four payments. To date only the first two payments have been announced and these have included a further £1.421m for West Sussex Schools.

**7. Issues for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee**

- 7.1 The Committee is asked to consider the information in this report and the evidence provided by the subject matter expert at the meeting on the County Council’s approach to achievement and attainment of Children in West Sussex and how the plans and actions being taken are designed to contribute to championing high achievement for all children.

**8. Consultation**

- 8.1 Not applicable – this is a report to provide detail to the Committee of current work that is underway. A consultation will be carried out as part of the development of the Education and Skills Strategy at the appropriate time.

**9. Risk Implications and Mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating Action (in place or planned)</b>
Attainment gap for disadvantaged children widening and therefore not achieving their full potential	Attainment gap for disadvantaged children at Key Stage 2 is a key performance indicator within Our Council Plan. Through the established strategies for <a href="#">School Effectiveness 2018-22</a> and <a href="#">SEND &amp; Inclusion 2019-24</a> , the local authority’s ambition and influence is being implemented in targeted ways through training, support and intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people. A strategy for Early Years will also be included within the Education and Skills Strategy that will be developed later this year, recognising the importance of school readiness to enable children to successfully transition into school. This is core to addressing some of the challenges faced by children who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs.

**10. Other Options Considered**

- 10.1 Not applicable – this is a report for information.

**11. Equality Duty**

- 11.1 Every child has the right to a good start in life and should not be discriminated against due to learning needs, disabilities, gender or race.

**12. Human Rights Implications**

- 12.1 All children and young people have the right to an appropriate education that meets their individual learning needs and which supports their emotional and mental wellbeing.

**Paul Wagstaff,**  
Director of Education and Skills

**Contact:**  
Paul Wagstaff, Director of Education and Skills,

**Background Papers** - None

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<b>Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee</b>
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<b>12 January 2022</b>
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<b>Children First Improvement - Children We Care for in West Sussex</b>
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<b>Report by the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning</b>
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## **Summary**

This report sets out the activity and improvements that have taken place to services for Children we care for (children looked after by West Sussex County Council) since the Ofsted Judgement in May 2019. The report also provides details of evidence of where improvements have been made and a summary of plans to address identified areas for further improvement (Section 4).

### **The report covers the following areas** (Section 2):

- Leadership and governance
- Corporate Parenting Panel
- Improving Permanence in outcomes for children
- Care Plans and Visits
- Health Assessments
- The needs of un-born children - Pre-Birth work
- The Fostering Service
- Life Story work
- Educational needs and attainment and role of Virtual School
- The County Council's Residential Services
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC)
- Voice and Participation of Children we Care for (Section 3)

### **The focus for Scrutiny**

The Committee is invited to consider the improvement activity in services for Children we Care For as set out in the report and how these measures are providing better outcomes for those children.

Key areas for scrutiny include:

1. To consider the evidence and improvement activities outlined in Sections 2 and 3 of this report and whether this gives assurance that sufficient progress has been made to date to address the areas of improvement highlighted by Ofsted and the Commissioner.
2. To consider the plans for future improvement set out in Section 4 and whether these provide assurance that continued progress will be made to achieve a high-quality service for Children we Care for.
3. To consider what, if any, further assurance or reports the Committee requires to demonstrate that the journey of improvement remains on target.

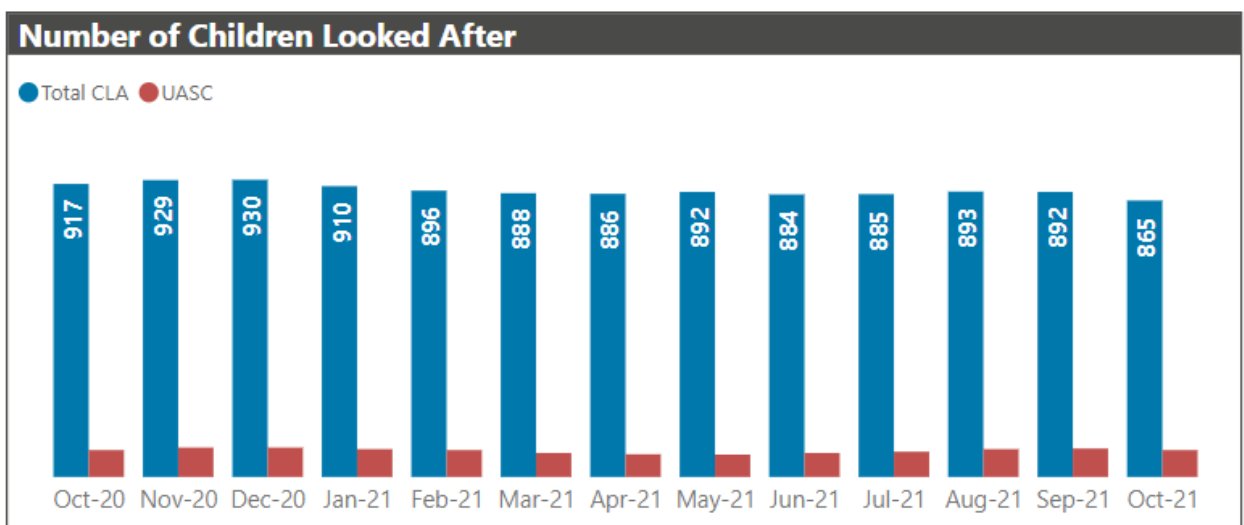
The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

## 1. Background and Context

### Introduction

- 1.1 This report will review the improvement in services to Children we Care for, also known as Looked After Children (LAC), since the Ofsted judgement of May 2019. Following a summary of Ofsted’s initial findings, together with those of the Commissioner for Children’s Services in West Sussex, the authority’s response will be discussed. An evaluation of the current improved situation will be made, identifying areas of continued under-performance, where further focus is needed. This report is pertinent since Ofsted intends to base its next Monitoring Visit in March 2022 on Children in Care. The Committee will be aware that the service is on a journey of improvement from a very low base. This report provides evidence of how far the Council’s services have improved to date, whilst not being complacent, and highlighting which areas require further improvement.
- 1.2 All members of the County Council hold a shared responsibility as corporate parents and receive training for this role as a compulsory part of their induction or continued training.
- 1.3 In terms of the national perspective, the 2021 review entitled ‘Case for Change’ took as its starting point that all local authorities with care responsibilities (together with their partners) should as a matter of course strive for the same qualities of care for their looked after cohort as any normal parent would naturally aspire to for their own children. The West Sussex Vision for children and young people echoes this approach and the improvement plans demonstrate a collective determination to meet this goal.

### Trends in Children we Care for



- 1.4 The County Council currently cares for 865 children (October 2021), an increase of 30% since 2018. However, for many years the number of children cared for was below the national average per capita and

substantially below statistical neighbours. This was primarily due to the fact that West Sussex thresholds for care were too high and that children were being left in situations that were unsafe, as outlined in the Ofsted inspection in 2019. These issues have been addressed. Therefore, the increase in overall numbers since 2018 is in part a correction to bring West Sussex in line with comparable local authorities. The current trend, shown in the chart above is of stability in net numbers of children cared for, although within this there is regular movement into and out of care. The total is subject to marginal long-term reduction: this is due to the application of thresholds to prevent children being taken into care unnecessarily, where another safe option is available – such as the local authority making the necessary provision of accommodation without needing to take on parental responsibility.

### **Ofsted Inspection 2019**

- 1.5 In its May 2019 report following the inspection in the previous February/ March, Ofsted found the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers to be inadequate. Too few children in care had an up-to-date, good-quality care plan and children were waiting too long for assessments of their health needs and for permanent homes. Delays in responding to cases of neglect led to children coming into care too late, by which time their needs had often become complex and challenging. Inspectors identified ‘missed opportunities to improve children’s lives and to achieve permanence in families when it is right for children’.

### **Permanence**

- 1.6 The goal of all care responsibility is **permanence** - that is, that each child or young person should have a stable and supportive family home in which to grow to maturity - whether through a safe return to the birth family, living with other guardians or carers, through fostering or adoption, or through the authority’s own residential care arrangements.
- 1.7 In 2019, Ofsted found an inconsistent approach to permanence planning in West Sussex, leading to a large number of children experiencing drift and delay, lacking stability and the opportunity to build their lives in a secure environment. Too many children were subject to temporary placements for too long, especially children with a disability, and with a lack of drive to turn temporary fostering arrangements into a secure adoption. Progress to adoption, where it occurred, was slow. Moreover, Life Story work – so crucial to a child’s sense of their own identity - was delivered erratically, and children who had been adopted were not being regularly provided with Life Story books. Quality and timeliness of pre-birth placements for parent and child was also absent. Accordingly, Ofsted Recommendation 6 called for wholesale improvement in ‘permanence planning for children, including the availability and use of foster-to-adopt placements, timeliness of assessments and planning for unborn babies’.

## **2. How the Service has responded**

### **Leadership and Governance**

- 2.1 Reports to this Committee covering different aspects of the service improvement agenda have repeatedly stressed the essential ingredient of

having a stable, high-quality leadership team in place, committed to driving the service forward to long-term goals and motivating the workforce to make this journey, with the requisite communication and support mechanisms in place. The Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting was therefore recruited into post on a permanent basis in October 2020 and has since confirmed his senior leadership team to drive the improvements within the service.

### **Corporate Parenting Panel**

- 2.2 In 2019, Ofsted stated that the Corporate Parenting Panel was 'largely ineffective in delivering much-needed improvements', and with 'limited impact on making a demonstrable difference to services or outcomes for children in care'. The Commissioner for Children's Services subsequently recommended that it 'be reformed and redesigned in order that the voice of the child is heard by the organisation in an informed and constructive way'.
- 2.3 The re-founded Corporate Parenting Panel now has the appropriate high profile that it requires within the authority, and commands full Cabinet support. It is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. The arrangements have been substantially improved to include the attendance of children, and the creation of multi-agency subgroups, which also include the participation of young people. There is very high personal commitment and scrutiny by the Cabinet Member and other elected members regarding the progress of Children we Care for and care experienced children. Other notable improvements include the refresh of the Terms of Reference of the Panel in collaboration with young people themselves; continuing Corporate Parenting Training being made mandatory for all members; and a revision of the agendas to ensure they are young person focused.

### **Improving Permanence**

- 2.4 The current focus on permanence identifies the service as one now basing all its priorities on delivering better outcomes for children and young people, rather than (as previously) being frequently preoccupied with process. To this end, a Permanence Oversight Board was created, including representatives from across service areas, to work on a joint Permanence Plan, raise the profile and understanding of permanence, and improve the pace and consistency of permanence outcomes. In terms of officer resource, a dedicated Permanence Team has been established around social workers with a special expertise in this area, to promote all aspects of permanence throughout the service, tracking delivery of outcomes and improving policies and procedures. This includes work to increase the pace of adoption, reduce the number of unlawful placements, and increase the regularity and quality of Life Story work (2.16 below).
- 2.5 A Permanence Panel has been in place since March 2020. This provides a structure to agree placements as permanent, to challenge and review where children are experiencing drift and delay, to support a return to the family home where this is feasible, and to ensure the best outcomes for siblings. This Panel has seen the number of children in permanent placement more than double to 245 in November 2021 from a base of 108 in February 2020; the number of permanence planning meetings held in 12 months has more than doubled, to 2,356. The Panel has received positive feedback after observation by partners from Hampshire County Council and been given



favourable notice by Ofsted inspectors. Permanence planning meetings now link in more constructively with legal processes, to ensure greater pace and consistency in delivering positive outcomes. Since April 2020 there has been close cooperation with Adoption South East, the Regional Adoption Agency, leading to an improvement in performance on adoption outcomes, in spite of significant court delays occasioned by Covid-19. The previous long waits for children to have a match have now become the exception rather than the rule. The key performance indicator entitled 'Permanence plans are in place for children looked after by the 2nd review, and timely' carries an expectation of 100%: it has shown sustained improvement from 89% in August 2020 to 98% currently (October 2021).

### **Care Plans and Visits**

- 2.6 The service has a range of performance standards, which are closely monitored to reflect the critical need to ensure that Children we Care for have an up-to-date care plan that reflects their needs and wishes, and that they receive regular visits. The target for children to have a care plan in place and reviewed is 100%, and during 2021 relatively steady progress has been made towards this, with performance (October 2021) at 96%; (31 March 2021 87%). However, the percentage of statutory visits for Children Looked After in timescales is less strong, at 89% in October. This indicator benefited during the Covid-19 lockdown when national legislation permitted 'virtual' visits (video-call etc) to meet the statutory criteria, but these provisions expired in October 2021. Since then, performance has continued to be hampered by Covid-related factors, and it is estimated that 5% of visits in the last two months have had timescales disrupted in this way. However, some improvement is evident in November, when 93% of visits were on time.

### **Health Assessments**

- 2.7 Ensuring that proper health provision is in place for all Children we Care for is a key area of continued focus. In its 2019 inspection, Ofsted found that 'of the children who started to be looked after during December 2018, only 13% had an initial health assessment completed on time. This means that children's health needs are not properly understood at the early stages of care planning'. It noted that there were also long waits for mental health support. The Initial Health Assessment (IHA) is one of the main indicators for children looked after by or through the authority. Historically, there was frequent delay in the IHA being completed to the required standard (within 20 working days of the child becoming looked after): this has remained an issue and is acknowledged to be an area of under-performance. Booking and securing actual attendance at a health appointment presents a challenge in that it requires careful coordination between the social worker, the NHS health practitioner and the child and their carer. Performance was inevitably impacted by the pandemic and monthly data has been very variable – during 2021 ranging between 20% and 59%.
- 2.8 Initial Health Assessments therefore present a continuing challenge across Children's Social Care and for Health partners. Covid-19 posed problems in accessing consent, and Health have experienced a shortage of practitioners. Health partners are currently working on a proposal to move to a single hub model whereby assessments will all take place in one location to maximise

availability and flexibility of practitioners, and to potentially co-locate some other services. Work within the service to address performance against timelines has focused on a daily dashboard which sets out which referrals are required and when they are due: this is updated on a daily basis and can be seen by all managers. The tool represents significant progress in managing the situation, since this information has not been readily available to staff in the past year. Regular coordination meetings are also now in place between the Children Looked After Nurses and administrative staff in both organisations.

- 2.9 Performance on the subsequent Review Health Assessments (RHA) has been stable and above national averages, at around 85%. The two main factors accounting for later assessments are: older children not wishing to consent to an assessment; and children placed out of county where there is complexity in getting assessments booked, since unique arrangements and communication are often needed.
- 2.10 Timeliness aside, the current position for children cared for over at least 12 months, is that 86% have an up-to-date health review and 70% have had a dental check: this represents an improvement on past performance, (for instance, at 31 March 2021 dental check compliance was at 52%) but more is needed to be done to meet a minimum standard of timeliness and quality. The results of the joint initiative described above between the service and its partners to address longstanding issues with IHAs, dental checks and screening for mental health issues will be reported to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

### **Pre-birth work**

- 2.11 As noted above, Ofsted in 2019 criticised the quality of planning for unborn babies. The service has responded through a range of measures coordinated by a Pre-birth action plan, and a Pre-birth policy due for completion in January 2022. A stronger grip on pre-birth assessments is now achieved through tracking all cases, with advice and support being given to social workers on these cases. For parents with very young children, the service has made provision for targeted and focused work, to ensure that babies do not experience drift and delay in planning for their futures. There is a strong focus on scrutinising performance levels, with an increase in the proportion of pre-birth assessments (PBAs) completed in time, and improvements in areas such as the number of Foster for Adoption (FFA) placements being made. However, there is still much work to be completed around the consistent quality of assessments, pre-birth intervention, and timely birth-planning, as summarised in Section 4.

### **Fostering**

- 2.12 A detailed report on Phase 2 of the Fostering Service Review will be brought to this Committee in March 2022. This section provides a brief summary of Fostering service developments within the broader context of corporate parenting. In spite of the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to recruit more foster carers generally, the summary picture of the service is positive. In terms of productivity, over the past year, 75% of foster carers were caring for a child for 75% of the year: this represents good utilisation of the foster carer resource and exceeds the national average of 69%

utilisation. The various feedback mechanisms in place show that there is a good relationship between social workers and foster carers, and in a recent survey, most foster carers scored the support they receive from their supervising social worker as 8/10 or above; the most common score was 10/10. Work continues to drive progress throughout the range of assessment activity underpinning service outcomes, and additional resource has been brought in to support work pressures, for instance with foster panels.

- 2.13 The increase in financial rates for foster carers with multiple children from April 2021 has brought West Sussex up to a competitive standard with neighbouring local authorities. While data is still being assembled, there is early evidence of a positive impact from the changes in terms of fostering enquiries and transferring foster carers, and an increase in the number of approved places per foster carer has been observed. Comparing April to October 2021 with April to October 2020:
- Visitors to the fostering website have increased by 76%
  - Fostering enquiries have increased by 36%
  - Generic fostering placement approvals have increased by 33%
  - 26 new fostering assessments are underway - an increase of 47%
  - Approvals for 2+ children have increased by 400%
  - Around 60% of current applicants being assessed are in their 40s, which represents a younger cohort of foster carers coming into the service, and as such is a very welcome support to succession continuity.

### **Fostering for Adoption**

- 2.14 Promoting arrangements whereby temporary fostering successfully converts to a child being adopted into a nurturing family is one of the best ways of achieving permanence for that child. As noted above, Ofsted in 2019 was critical of the authority's stance and performance in this area. To respond to this issue, the service is now working closely and proactively with Adoption South East and other partners and using the latest techniques to identify pre-birth and very young children who may be suitable for a foster to adopt solution. A promotional video is being prepared to highlight the approach to foster to adopt throughout the service. These measures help to remedy a previous situation where such opportunities were being missed.
- 2.15 In terms of outcomes, over the last 12 months there have been 15 children supported or placed in foster to adopt arrangements; 5 have subsequently gone on to be adopted; 4 have been placed in their adoptive families awaiting adoption hearings, and 4 placed awaiting matching panel; 2 children are awaiting placement orders before their matches can formally be progressed. There are also a further 10 children for whom fostering for adoption is being considered as a potential plan between now and February 2022.

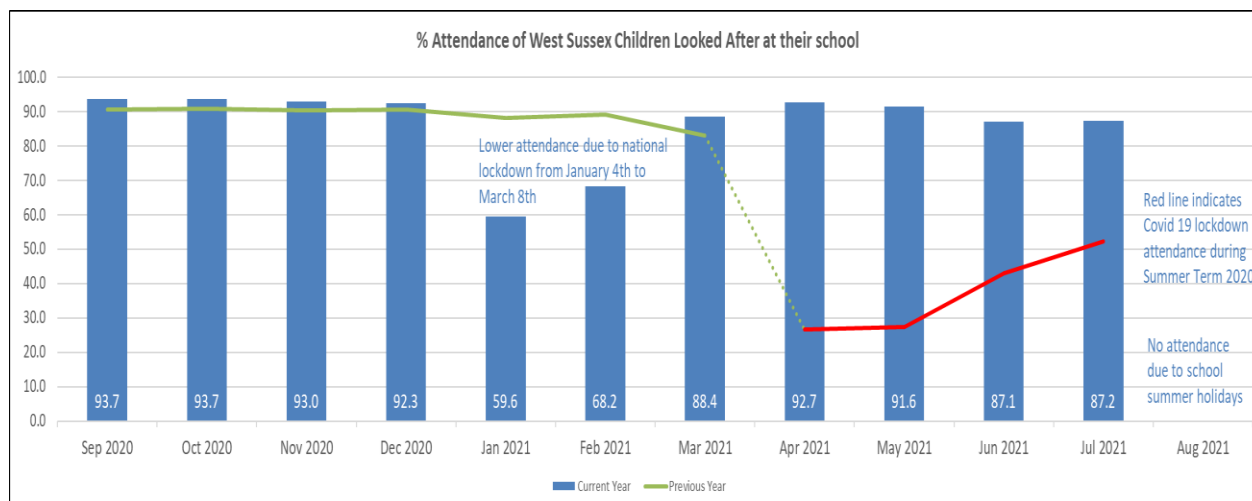
### **Life Story Work**

- 2.16 The objective of Life Story work is to provide a secure base for the cared for child to explore their past, present and future through creating a written record of their life events in a manner appropriate for them. Historically this activity did not feature significantly within West Sussex social work practice,

but major changes have now come into play. Children subject to adoption plans, long-term fostering, and Special Guardianship have life story books and later life letters. A range of tools and mechanisms has been developed for ensuring this material is captured consistently in the child’s record. This work when undertaken has been seen to aid children’s understanding of their circumstances and support their emotional wellbeing and permanence. The Life Story policy was being reviewed in December 2021 to ensure that best practice is pursued throughout the service. Feedback through recent audit activity and through the last applicable Ofsted Monitoring Visit in May 2021 has identified that Life Story work is increasingly present and beneficial to children, and that relationship-building with children is now a strong feature of casework.

### Education and Virtual School

- 2.17 Ensuring that Children we Care for receive a high quality of education, equal to that enjoyed by their peers, provides a strong foundation for fulfilled lives. The Virtual School monitors the educational progress and attendance of all children looked after by the County Council. The Pupil Premium Plus grant (PPP) is allocated by the Department for Education to support its work. In 2019, Ofsted found that, due to issues of quality and delays in completing Personal Education Plans (PEPs), the Virtual School’s knowledge about and impact on the academic outcomes of children in care was limited. Persistent absence from school among this cohort was found to be high.
- 2.18 The Virtual School works with the wider professional network to ensure that all Children we Care for are in receipt of a high quality, appropriate education with most of the children attending schools graded good or better by Ofsted. Personal Education Plans have been redesigned to support children in their individual phase or circumstances and to focus attention on outcomes. During the academic year 2020/21, 95% of children had PEPs completed regularly and within timescales.
- 2.19 **School attendance** for all children has been impacted by the partial closure of schools during the pandemic. Attendance for the Children we Care for remained strong through the last academic year and the Virtual School ensured that all children who required in-person attendance were able to achieve it.



- 2.20 Due to the pandemic, measuring formal **academic achievement** in 2020/21 has been dependent on Centre Assessed Grades and there is no formal release of results for comparison. For all GCSE subjects, over 95% of Children we Care for achieved a graded pass and over 60% achieved a standard pass. Over a third achieved a strong pass in all GCSE subjects. In response to the Ofsted (2019) judgement, a robust system has been developed to look at the progress that children are making in the core subjects. This allows scrutiny of the impact of being in care, and the interventions of the Virtual School on the education of children. A full breakdown of the progress being made by the children will be evaluated by the Virtual School governing body.

### **Residential Services**

- 2.21 The Residential service is recognised to be a high-performing part of Children's Social Care. Written and verbal feedback from children, parents, and partner agencies provides strong evidence that the work carried out by residential staff and management is highly rated. This is further demonstrated by reduced rates of children going missing, almost no restrictive physical interventions being necessary and a skilful response to presenting behaviours.
- 2.22 Over the past 18 months there have been no placement breakdowns, despite children coming from homes where other providers have failed to find the correct systems to engage them. There have been notable improved educational outcomes this year for all children in the homes, with a high level of children's participation and consultation. Across the past 12 months there have been almost no complaints across the service. An area for improvement concerns the need for more support from the Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS – NHS) to meet the complex needs and vulnerabilities of some of the residents. Improved liaison with Disability services is also required.
- 2.23 Stable and strong practice in the three homes is well evidenced within the full Ofsted regulatory inspection reports, with each being rated as 'Outstanding'. There have been 3 full inspection visits carried out by Ofsted this year, which have confirmed the ratings and praised the staff teams' work with children and the successful outcomes achieved within the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic. The establishments benefit from good workforce retention rates, indicating a stable staff team.

### **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)**

- 2.24 The Children's Asylum team provides specialist support to safeguard and promote the welfare of unaccompanied minors arriving from abroad. The Committee was provided with a briefing report last month and will be aware that this is a complex cohort of children with varying legal rights to receive support, who due to their lived experiences are highly vulnerable. The complexity of their needs is exacerbated by cultural and language differences. Under the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) rota, West Sussex has committed to take children seeking asylum from other local authorities where they are supporting disproportionate numbers of children and young people due to their locations near ports of entry. After Kent and Portsmouth,

West Sussex is the next highest provider as a local authority for children seeking asylum within the region. There are currently 90 children open to the team (November 2021): this number is expected to rise, leading to the prospect of future resource pressure.

- 2.25 The National Transfer Scheme Rota mandate for Children Seeking Asylum comes into effect as of January 2022, however, WSCC have started engaging with the process as of the beginning of December 2021 and have already accepted 3 children via the scheme.

### **3. Voice and Participation**

- 3.1 This section adds further detail to the information provided in the report to the last meeting of the Committee on 1 December 2021. In order to place Children we Care for at the centre of all undertakings, the service must engage with them to understand their needs and wishes, and in the broadest sense to regard them as partners in designing and delivering the services they receive, through a genuinely participatory relationship. The language used in meetings, letters, Life Story work and other records should not only be age-appropriate but should reflect an empathic approach to corporate parenting. This approach is one that is being led and modelled by managers throughout the service, and tangible signs of a cultural change are becoming evident. Additionally, the service is working with the Care Leaders Fellowship, a company specialising in young people's participation in the care sector. Examples of ways that engagement with cared for children is occurring are given below, together with the impact that this is having.
- 3.2 **Mind of My Own**, the digital app for young people to communicate with social care practitioners has experienced strong growth in use since its introduction in 2016. In 2018 it was used 127 times; 2019 417; 2020 677; and 395 times in the first six months of 2021. There is evidence of its enhanced value to young people especially during Covid-19 lockdown. Case studies have demonstrated its impact, for example in raising formal complaints, and making changes in supervised contact arrangements. Feedback is regularly taken from young people and workers on its usage to support further improvements.
- 3.3 **Children in Care Council (CiCC)**, the forum for 10–16-year-olds in care to express their views about the services that affect them, has been undertaking a range of activity, including the following:
- 'Participation Pack' allowing young people to consider content of meetings a week before attending: has led to greater engagement and outcomes.
  - CiCC completed the final version of 'New into Care Pack' written from a young person's perspective.
  - There are strong linkages with the Corporate Parenting Panel and other boards, where cared for children speak and have their voices heard. A CPP Young People's Panel has been created, allowing young people in care to contribute directly to the work of the CPP; speaking at and co-chairing meetings are now becoming normalised.

- Included in the CiCC workplan is the 'Treat Us the Same' campaign to reduce stigma for young people in care: this has led to a reduction in children taken out of classes, from over 400 per month, to only 12. Other workplan activity includes 'Involve me in decisions made about me' and 'Language used about young people in care'.
- Working to improve services: for instance, reviewing tools and resources, adding young people's voice to the new Social Work Practice Standards, and developing resources used by the Missing Children service.

3.4 **EPIC (Exceptional People in Care) Awards, 7 November 2021:** This year's event to recognise the achievements of Children we Care for and care experienced children led to 330 individuals being nominated from different services and organisations throughout West Sussex, with 500 people attending the event in person. This is believed to be the largest achievement event for CLA/Care Leavers in the UK, attracting significant press coverage in West Sussex.

3.5 **Bright Spots** is a charitable sector initiative to support local authorities to systematically listen to their children in care and care leavers about the things that are important to them. The County Council is participating in a national survey to gauge subjective wellbeing of young people in care aged 4-18: this will lead to an action plan led by young people and will influence the local service plan, with impact on practice improvement anticipated.

#### 4. **Current assessment and continuing priorities**

This section summarises progress to date and future improvement plans with Children we Care for.

##### **Outcomes of recent Ofsted Monitoring Visits**

4.1 In May 2021, an Ofsted Monitoring Visit focused on Permanence planning, Life Story work and Management oversight and identified 'steady progress'. The main findings were:

- Children and young people were thriving in their permanent families and their needs were being met.
- The decision-making and planning for finding children and young people long-lasting homes was well-considered.
- There was thoughtful and creative practice from staff, especially around Life Story work, helping children to understand what has happened in their lives.
- While processes and quality assurance had been strengthened, there was the need for more consistency around the impact of the work taking place.
- Compliance with audit completion had significantly increased.

- Management oversight was improving but there was more to do to ensure consistency in the quality and impact of assessments and plans for children and young people.

4.2 These May 2021 results were encouraging, but inspectors were clear at that time that in general there was still too much inconsistency of practice to give assured outcomes for children and young people. The subsequent Monitoring Visit in September 2021 was specifically focused on Children with Disabilities, but the inspectors commented that 'A stable senior leadership team is resolute in its approach to achieving sustainable improvements for the children of West Sussex'. It follows that the forthcoming Monitoring Visit in March 2022, scheduled to focus on Children in Care, will represent an extremely important milestone assessment of the progress being made against the topic areas covered in this report.

### **Priorities and Planned work for the next year**

4.3 Across the next 12 months key areas of improvement will be:

- Complete the **Fostering Service Review**: a report on this topic is expected to be brought to this Committee at its March 2022 meeting. Ensure that the benefits of the Review are felt in terms of improved permanence outcomes for children and young people.
- Further improvements to **Permanence Planning** – including ensuring that every child is the subject of a clear and SMART plan regarding their permanence, with a renewed focus on older children and the potential for restorative work with their families, and to ensure there is rigorous oversight that the right children are taken into care.
- **Entry to Care**: Redouble efforts to deliver safe systems to ensure that only those children enter care for whom this is the right option: this will include an Entry to Care Panel to ensure senior management oversight of all children proposed to become looked after by the authority, including accommodation and placement suitability.
- **Pre-birth work**: Make further improvements to the timeliness and quality of pre-birth assessments, including raising the profile of pre-birth work and providing further training for social workers. Improving the use of legal procedures in respect of care proceedings and working smarter to minimise unnecessary process.
- **Performance**: Make further improvements in those areas where key performance indicators (KPIs) are currently unsatisfactory – especially in regard to Health Assessments and outcomes (as discussed at paras 2.6-2.10 above), and working effectively with partners to this end.
- Manage the resources necessary to meet the anticipated increase in demand in services to **Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers** (UASC) and to meet the requirements under the National Transfer Scheme rota commitments (para 2.24 above refers).



- Monitor and maintain the overarching focus on permanence for all children and young people in the authority’s care, and to ensure that permanence action planning in the best interests of children is effective.

**5. Resources**

- 5.1 The Council has provided the required and appropriate resources through the budget setting process for this part of the service.

**6. Issues for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee**

- 6.1 The Committee is invited to note the wide range of improvement activity in services for Children we Care for, summarised in this report, and to endorse that this is sufficient and satisfactory in the context of delivering the Children First Improvement agenda up to the current time. The Committee is also invited to consider the plans for further improvements in services to Children we Care for, and to consider what, if any, further information is needed to provide assurance that the journey of improvement remains on target.

**7. Consultation**

- 7.1 Not applicable – this is a report for information

**8. Risk Implications and Mitigations**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigating Action (in place or planned)</b>
The risk that the service has not made sufficient progress to satisfy the expectations of Ofsted inspectors at the Monitoring Visit in March 2022	Ofsted has consistently agreed that management has a sound and realistic understanding of the position of the service, and inspectors have recognised the upward trajectory of improvement to date. It is natural, with the passage of time, that expectations of delivering a quality service should increase. The improvements set out in this report, together with the plans to address acknowledged deficiencies, are considered to place the service in an appropriate position for this phase of the improvement journey.
Risks to the stability of children and young people in the care of the local authority arising from the current change processes and/or external restrictions (e.g. Covid-19).	Evidence from Ofsted commentary, from the Commissioner for Children’s Services, from the partner in practice, and from internal audit work, together with greatly improved engagement with the customers of the service, suggests that the experiences of Children we Care for in West Sussex are becoming increasingly stable and that the children are benefiting from the improvements already in place. The service has handled the Covid-19 restrictions well, and can be expected to continue to do so.

## **9. Other Options Considered**

- 9.1 Not applicable – this is a report for information.

## **10. Equality Duty**

- 10.1 The service recognises the primary importance of child safeguarding, sound family relationships, good parenting, and the nurture of children to fulfil their potential. The provision of the service is based on need, as determined through formal assessment protocols. This need is not explicitly related to formally protected characteristics, but any such characteristic is and will continue (as now) to be respected in compliance with equality principles and taken into account in the way in which the service is delivered.
- 10.2 In terms of those with a protected characteristic, the service will ensure enablement and support across all relevant categories, and this will both continue and be enhanced through the Children First agenda.

## **11. Social Value**

- 11.1 The Children First agenda and measures for service recovery discussed in this report will directly support improved delivery of the West Sussex Plan priority to give every child the Best Start in Life. Enhancing the protection of young lives and support for family life will continue to build resilience and social capital and contribute towards stronger and more effective communities. The implementation of the service improvements will also respect sustainability principles in accordance with the County Council's strategic policies.

## **12. Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 12.1 There are positive implications for Sections 17, 37 and 39 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in the prevention and reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour, and in reducing offending and re-offending by young people, all of which are affected by the progress activity discussed in this report.

## **13. Human Rights Implications**

- 13.1 The County Council has an overriding duty to safeguard the Human Rights of children and young persons in its area, and this has been recognised in the Children First agenda. The Council is mindful of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights – The Right to Respect for Family and Private Life - and has taken relevant factors into consideration in preparing this report. The processing of personal and special category data is subject to the Council's Data Protection Act policies and procedures in relation to discharging the Council's and its partners' legal responsibilities.
- 13.2 The County Council is also mindful of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - which states that all children have the right to be consulted and to have their opinions heard on any decision that affects them. Hearing, understanding, and acting upon the voice and

experiences of the child is a key design principle of the Children First service improvements. The Council will continue to ensure it fulfils all its statutory duties regarding meeting the needs of children and young persons in its area during the Children First service transformation programme.

**Lucy Butler,**

Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning

**Contact:**

Daniel Ruaux, Assistant Director - Corporate Parenting

**Appendix 1** – Performance Summary Report (November 2021)

**Background Papers** - None

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# Children & Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

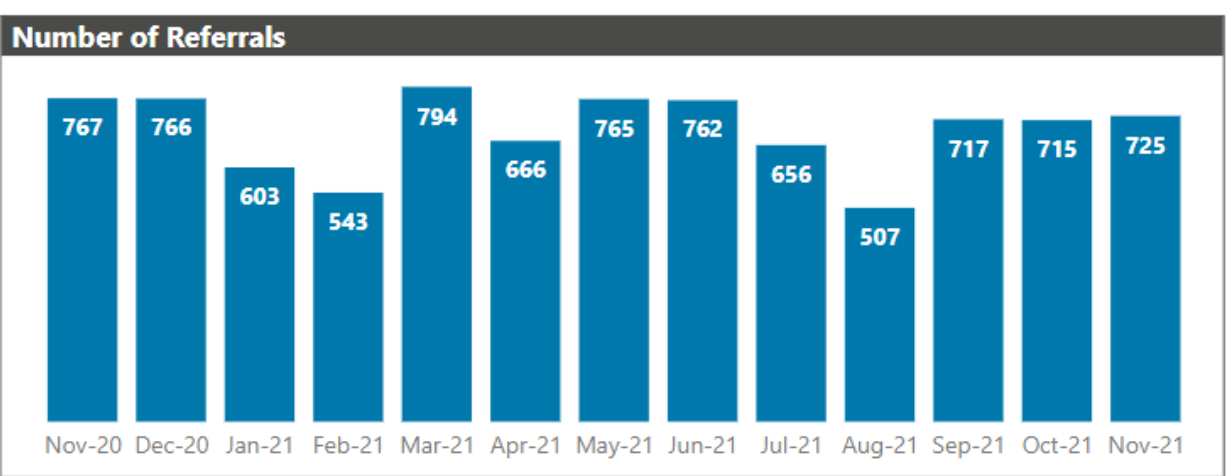
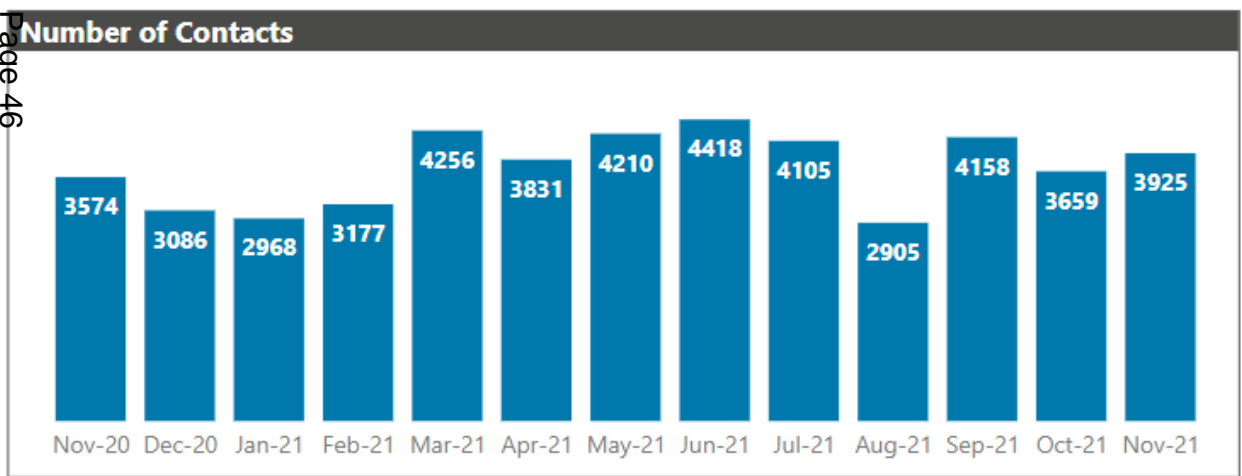
12 January 2022

Performance  
Summary Report  
(key slides)



# Contacts and Referrals

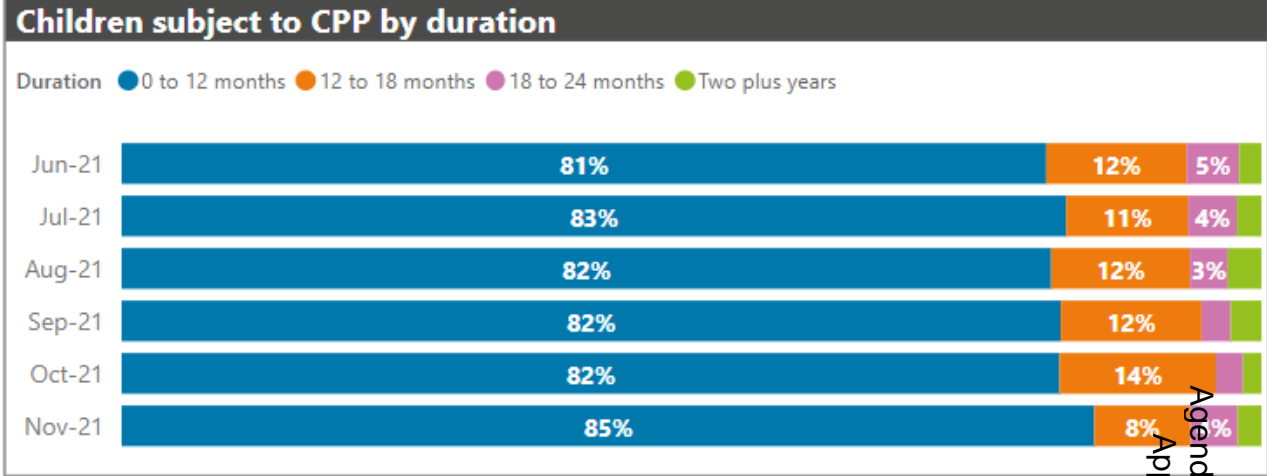
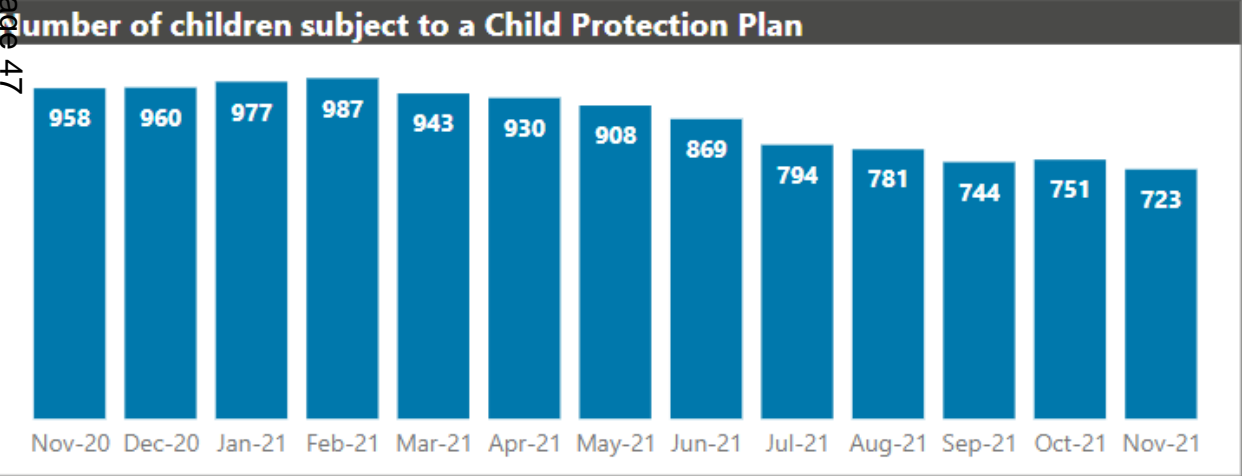
- Number of Contacts and Referrals has increased in November 2021.
- Conversion rate from Contact to Referral has decreased to 18%
- Timeliness of Contacts in 3 days has remained high at 98.5% contacts.
- Referrals completed within 1 working day increased to 94.5%.
- 186 children were re-referred to Children’s Social Care (25.6%). **Statistical Neighbours and England Re-Referrals 22% (20/21)**



# Child Protection Performance

- Decrease in CP numbers in November 2021 to 723; 14.6% (106) have been on a plan for more than 12 months, with 4% (30) of children on a plan for 18 months to 2 years and 2% (15 children) for 2 years or more.
- Initial Child Protection Conferences timeliness 63.3% **Statistical Neighbours 81% and England 78% (19/20)**
- Review Child Protection Conferences timeliness 94.4% **Statistical Neighbours 92% and England 93% (20/21)**
- Child Protection Statutory visits 81.0%
- Rolling 12 months (Dec 20 to Nov 2021), 943 children started on CPP of those 236 were for a second/subsequent time ever which is 25.0%, and 13 were for a second/subsequent time within 12 months which is 1.4%.

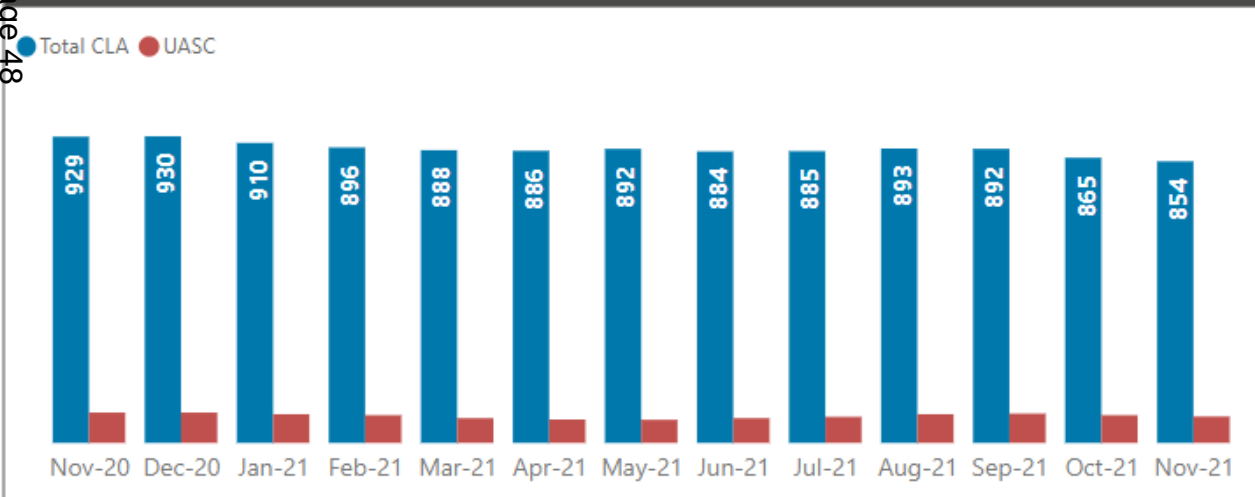
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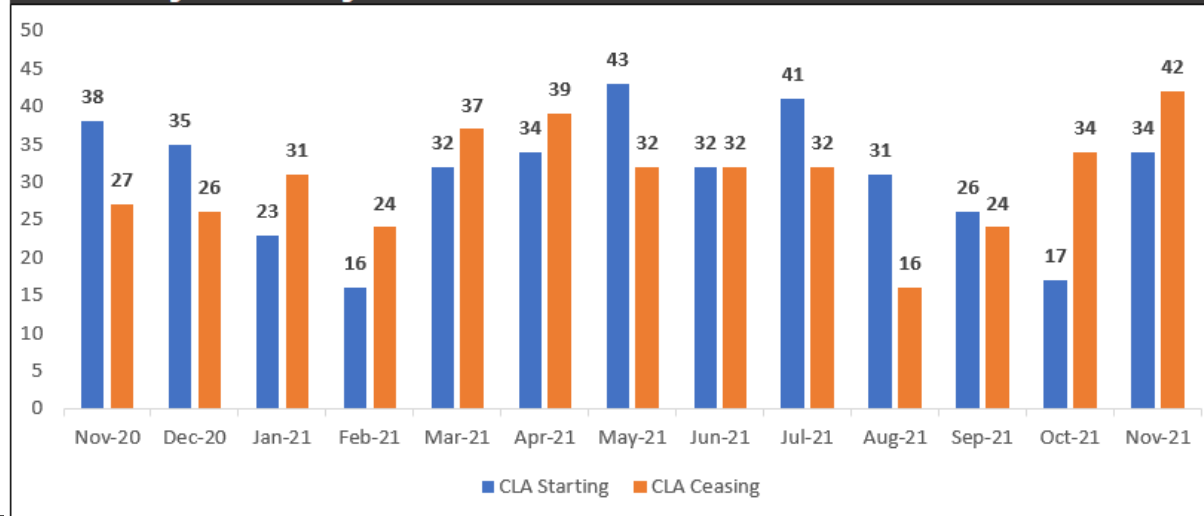
# Children we Care for

- Decrease in the number of children we care for at 854 for end November 21
- West Sussex rate = 48.1 [Statistical Neighbours 50 and England 67 \(20/21\)](#)
- Decrease in number of Children we Care for starting and increase in numbers ceasing in November 21.
- Children we Care for statutory visiting increased to 93.1%
- 99% of Children we Care for have a care plan in place and 92% have a Pathway Plan in place
- 98% of Children we care for had all of their reviews completed in time during the last 12 months.
- Summer Term – 95% of children had an up to date PEP.

Number of Children Looked After



CLA Starting and Ceasing





**Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme 2021/2022**

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing/Approach
<b>1. Forthcoming Committee Meetings</b>		
<b>Performance and Resources Report – Q3</b>	<b>Performance monitoring</b> – To assess the performance indicators relating to Children and Young People's Services in Our Council Plan	9 March 2022
<b>Children First Improvement Update – Fostering Service Phase 2</b>	<b>Performance monitoring</b> - To seek assurance and evidence that appropriate progress is being made on the children first improvement Journey and outcomes are improving for children and families. <b>Focus:</b> Fostering Service Phase 2 – Pre-decision scrutiny to review the outcome of the consultation and the proposals for the fostering service, and provide comments to the Cabinet Member ahead of a decision being taken.	9 March 2022
<b>Children First Improvement Update</b>	<b>Performance monitoring</b> - To seek assurance and evidence that appropriate progress is being made on the children first improvement Journey and outcomes are improving for children and families. <b>Focus:</b> to be confirmed	8 June 2022
<b>Children First Improvement Update</b>	<b>Performance monitoring</b> - To seek assurance and evidence that appropriate progress is being made on the children first improvement Journey and outcomes are improving for children and families. <b>Focus:</b> to be confirmed	28 September 2022
<b>2. CYPSSC –Confirmed items for timetabling</b>		
<b>Children First Improvement Update – focus areas</b>	<b>Performance monitoring</b> - Focus areas of reports for future meetings to be confirmed. Potential areas that have been raised by Committee/previous reports include:	<i>At each meeting – Focus areas for 2022/23 meetings to be discussed by BPG on 2 February 2022.</i>

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing/Approach
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on progress and impact of workforce changes on Social Work practice and experience for children and families (to include staff engagement outcomes) – Summer 2022</li> <li>• Outcomes of recent Ofsted Monitoring visits and areas highlighted by the recent Commissioner update, e.g. consistent social work practice</li> <li>• Any examples or evidence and/or modelling being presented to the Commissioner and Ofsted to demonstrate the progress the service is making.</li> <li>• Monitoring the progress of cultural change within the service to improve the quality of service to residents.</li> <li>• Partnership working and impacts</li> <li>• Contribution of children to their reviews and how the voice of the child and families is being sought and used in the audit process</li> </ul>	
<b>Performance and Resources Report - Q4</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring:</b> To assess the performance indicators relating to Children and Young People’s Services in Our Council Plan (to be done quarterly).	<i>Timing and approach to Q4 being finalised.</i>
<b>West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> – to consider the successes and areas of improvement for the Partnership and to identify any areas for future scrutiny.	TBC.
<b>Education and Skills Strategy</b>	<b>Policy Development</b> – To input into the development of the Education and Skills Strategy that will replace the current School Effectiveness Strategy in 2022. Will include implications of the Skills for Jobs White Paper <a href="#">Link to current School Effectiveness Strategy</a> .	<i>Members to be part of engagement work of Strategy in 2022. Timing being confirmed with service.</i>
<b>Early Help Service – review of new model</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> – to assess the impact of the first year of implementation of the new Early Help Model. What is working well, is it achieving what it set	Late 2022/Early 2023

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing/Approach
	out to do and any areas for improvement (due to be implemented January 2022)	
<b>3. Business Planning Group – items for BPG to consider for Scrutiny (including those raised by Committee Members under 'Items for Future Scrutiny').</b>		
<b>Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of Children and Young People</b>	<b>Service Development</b> – to assess the provisions and plans in place to support young people’s mental health and emotional wellbeing.	All member briefing being arranged. Following briefing any potential areas of scrutiny will be explored with HASC.
<b>Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> - To assess the County Councils resilience and approach for managing increased demand.	Short briefing note has been provided to members on current approach (Nov 21). BPG to receive further update in 6 months (May 2022) to determine if item needs to remain on work programme.
<b>Placements for Children we Care for</b>	<b>Service Improvement</b> – To review the County Council’s sufficiency strategy for placements, including post-16 residential placements and the re-opening of some children’s residential homes, (requested by BPG in February 2020).	To remain on work programme for BPG to consider if there are any areas for future scrutiny
<b>Elective Home Education</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring</b> – to assess the County Council’s approach to elective home education. Impact of Covid-19 on EHE also to be considered.	To remain on work programme as further governance guidance is still awaited. Will assess once this guidance has been

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing/Approach
		released to determine if there are an areas for scrutiny.
<b>Support for School Governors</b>	Raised at CYPSSC on 14 April & 9 January- to identify any areas of improvement for the support, training and guidance provided to school governors and to consider recruitment and retention issues.	<i>Short briefing provided to BPG members on current recruitment and retention of school governors (November 2021) and shared with all Committee members. Recommend to remove from Work Programme.</i>
<b>Business Planning Group – to monitor</b>		
<b>Woodlands Meed</b>	BPG to monitor progress and identify any areas for scrutiny as the project progresses. <a href="#">Link to Woodlands Meed update page.</a>	Ongoing
<b>Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups</b>		
<b>Needs Assessments and EHCPs – Process, Practice and Delivery</b>	<b>Service Development</b> – To explore the process, criteria and practice of Education Health and Care Needs Assessments and Education and Health Care Plans. To review whether the County Council is providing a consistent approach and delivery to West Sussex Children and Families and to identify any potential areas of improvement.	<i>Membership and Draft ToR being published in Member Bulletin early January. Timescale for first meeting being drawn up.</i>



## Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The County Council must give at least 28 days' notice of all key decisions to be taken by councillors or officers. The Plan describes these proposals and the month in which the decisions are to be taken over a four-month period. Decisions are categorised according to [Cabinet Member](#) portfolios.

The most important decisions will be taken by the Cabinet. Due to the continuing public health measures, there will be limited public access to the meeting. Admission is by ticket only, bookable in advance via: [democratic.services@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westsussex.gov.uk). The meetings will be available to watch online via our [webcasting website](#). The [schedule of monthly Cabinet meetings](#) is available on the website. The Forward Plan is updated regularly and key decisions can be taken on any day in the month if they are not taken at Cabinet meetings. The [Plan](#) is available on the website. [Published decisions](#) are also available via the website.

A key decision is one which:

- Involves expenditure or savings of £500,000 or more (except treasury management); and/or
- Will have a significant effect on communities in two or more electoral divisions in terms of how services are provided.

The following information is provided for each entry in the Forward Plan:

<b>Decision</b>	A summary of the proposal.
<b>Decision By</b>	Who will take the decision - if the Cabinet, it will be taken at a Cabinet meeting in public.
<b>Date added</b>	The date the proposed decision was added to the Forward Plan.
<b>Month</b>	The decision will be taken on any working day in the month stated. If a Cabinet decision, it will be taken at the Cabinet meeting scheduled in that month.
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	How views and representations about the proposal will be considered or the proposal scrutinised, including dates of Scrutiny Committee meetings.
<b>Background Documents</b>	The documents containing more information about the proposal and how to obtain them (via links on the website version of the Forward Plan). Hard copies are available on request from the decision contact.
<b>Author</b>	The contact details of the decision report author
<b>Contact</b>	Who in Democratic Services you can contact about the entry

### Finance, assets, performance and risk management

Each month the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property reviews the Council's budget position and may take adjustment decisions. A similar monthly review of Council property and assets is carried out and may lead to decisions about them. These are noted in the Forward Plan as 'rolling decisions'.

Each month the Cabinet will consider the Council's performance against its planned outcomes and in connection with a register of corporate risk. Areas of particular significance may be considered at the scheduled Cabinet meetings.

Significant proposals for the management of the Council's budget and spending plans will be dealt with at a scheduled Cabinet meeting and shown in the Plan as strategic budget options.

For questions contact Katherine De La Mora on 033 022 22535, email [katherine.delamora@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:katherine.delamora@westsussex.gov.uk).

**Published: 4 January 2022**

## Forward Plan Summary

### Summary of all forthcoming executive decisions in Cabinet Member portfolio order

<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Subject Matter</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Procurement of residential provision for children with complex needs	January 2022
Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning	Extension of the Dynamic Purchasing System for Children's Placements and Other Support Services	January 2022
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Procurement of a Framework for Therapeutic Services for Children and Young People	January 2022
Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning	Award of contract for a Recording System for Children, Young People and Learning	February 2022
Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning	Award of places on the Framework - Urgent and Specialist Support for Children and Young People	February 2022
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Fostering Service Redesign	March 2022
Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills	Phase 2 Special Support Centre Programme - Edward Bryant Primary School, Bognor Regis - Allocation of Funding for Project Delivery	January 2022
Director of Property and Assets	Award of contract for the expansion of Palatine Primary School	January 2022
Director of Education and Skills	Contract Extension for the Provision of Adult Community Education	January 2022
Director of Property and Assets	Award of contract for works to expand Lindfield Primary Academy, Haywards Heath	January 2022
Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills	Burgess Hill Northern Arc - New Secondary School - Allocation of Capital Funding for Enabling Works	January 2022
Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills	Midhurst Rother College, Midhurst - Extension of Changing Rooms - Allocation of Capital Funding for Project Delivery	January 2022
Director of Property and Assets	Allocation of S106 Funding for Additional Accommodation at St Philip Howard Catholic Voluntary Academy, Barnham	January 2022
Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills	Proposed Expansion of Yapton CE Primary School - Allocation of Design Fees	January 2022
Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills	School Funding 2022/23	January 2022
Director of Property and Assets	Award of contract to provide permanent accommodation for the expansion of River Beach Primary School, Littlehampton	January 2022
Director of Property and Assets	Additional Budget Requirement to expand Lindfield Primary Academy, Haywards Heath.	February 2022
Director of Property and Assets	Award of contract for construction of an All Weather Pitch at The Forest School, Horsham	February 2022

<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Subject Matter</b>	<b>Date</b>
Director of Education and Skills	Award of contract for a Replacement Schools Information and Financial Management System	February 2022

## Children and Young People

### Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

<b>Procurement of residential provision for children with complex needs</b>	
<p>The County Council has a duty to take steps to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within its area which meets the needs of children within its care. Sourcing stable placements which adequately meet the requirements of children with complex needs is a particular challenge, and this picture is reflected nationally.</p> <p>The County Council has been working with other local authorities, as well as national associations representing providers of residential care, to identify potential solutions to these issues, the culmination of which will be the procurement of a new service, or services. The procurement will be conducted in partnership with other local authorities within the South East region, with the aim of developing new and innovative approaches to residential care provision for looked after children with complex needs, to better support sufficiency within the region.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will be requested to approve the commencement of a procurement process for residential provision for looked after children with complex needs. The Cabinet Member will also be asked to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning to enter into a legal agreement with the other local authorities involved and award the contract.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr Russell - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
<b>Date added</b>	18 November 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Procurement Legal Finance  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Thomas Strivens Tel: 033 022 22082
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel; 033 022 22553

**Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning**

**Extension of the Dynamic Purchasing System for Children's Placements and Other Support Services**

In March 2019 the Director of Children and Family Services approved the Contract Award of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to facilitate the purchase of Children's Placements and Other Support Services (CPOSS). This enables the sourcing of services such as residential care, independent foster services and educational placements ([decision OKD27\(18/19\)](#) refers).

The DPS was procured with an initial contract period of 3 years with the option to extend for up to a further 4 years. The initial contract period is due to conclude at the end of February 2022 and it is proposed to take up the option of extending the DPS for two years.

The Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning will be asked to approve the extension of the DPS for 2 years from March 2022.

<b>Decision by</b>	Lucy Butler - Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning
<b>Date added</b>	21 October 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Procurement Legal Finance  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	DPS Contract Award Decision - OKD27(18/19)
<b>Author</b>	Martin Cross Tel: 0330 222 3795, Charlotte Smith Tel: 033 022 2754
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

**Cabinet Member for Children and Young People**

**Procurement of a Framework for Therapeutic Services for Children and Young People**

As part of its statutory obligations the Council provides therapeutic assessments and therapeutic interventions for children and young people. This includes the provision of therapies from different disciplines for example psychotherapy, occupational therapy, play therapy.

Currently this need is predominately for children With Special Educational needs, receiving Social Care support, or in the Council's Care.



Whilst the County Council provides some of these services, the demand is such that a significant amount of provision has to be purchased from the external market and evaluation shows this is a trend expected to continue. In order to meet this demand, it is proposed to set up a Framework to enable the efficient sourcing of therapeutic services from qualified suppliers.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will be asked to approve: -

- The commencement of a procurement to set up a Framework to enable the purchase of therapeutic services and
- The delegation of authority to the Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning to award places on the Framework

<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr Russell - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
<b>Date added</b>	18 November 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills Finance Legal Procurement  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Daniel Ruaux Tel: 033 022 22695
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### **Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning**

#### **Award of contract for a Recording System for Children, Young People and Learning**

The Children, Young People and Learning (CYPL) Directorate plans to consolidate and/or integrate systems used to record information about children and their families.

CYPL currently has 11 systems in use and there is a need to significantly reduce this to support CYPL's improvement journey. This will help to achieve a coherent and consolidated view of involvement with a child and their family and improve the use of data and analysis to improve service provision.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People approved the commencement of a procurement process to seek a system supplier who could achieve the aim of consolidating and integrating recording systems (Decision [CYP01\(21/22\)](#) refers). The new recording solution will mainly cover education, early years and youth justice, but it will also consider how best to integrate with the Mosaic system for children's social care.

As part of decision CYP01 (21/22) the Cabinet Member also delegated authority to the Executive Director to award the contract. Therefore, on completion of the procurement

## Agenda Item 7

<p>process, the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning will be asked to approve the contract award to the successful bidder/s.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Lucy Butler - Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning
<b>Date added</b>	1 December 2021
<b>Month</b>	February 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>Finance Legal IT Procurement</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision CYP01 (21/22)
<b>Author</b>	Vince Clark Tel: 07402 338396
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning

<p><b>Award of places on the Framework - Urgent and Specialist Support for Children and Young People</b></p>	
<p>In October 2021 the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People approved the commencement of a procurement process for an Urgent and Specialist Support Framework Agreement (decision <a href="#">CYP03(21/22)</a> refers). The Framework Agreement will enable the County Council to source urgent and specialist support for vulnerable Children and young people in emergency situations at short notice periods and often the same day.</p> <p>As part of the decision to commence the procurement the Cabinet Member also approved the delegation of authority to the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning to implement the Framework Agreement and any subsequent award relating to these contracting arrangements, for the initial 4-year period with the option to extend for up to a further 4 years if required.</p> <p>Once the procurement process is complete the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning will be asked to implement the Framework Agreement and approve the award and joining onto the Framework Agreement of successful bidders.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Lucy Butler - Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning
<b>Date added</b>	15 December 2021
<b>Month</b>	February 2022

<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Procurement Legal Finance  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	
<b>Author</b>	Stephen Humphries
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

<b>Fostering Service Redesign</b>	
<p>A review is currently being undertaken of the Fostering service in West Sussex; this forms Phase 2 of the work to redesign the service. Revisions being considered will aim to ensure the County Council can offer in-house foster placements to different cohorts of children with a broad range of needs, strengthen the offer to existing carers to improve retention and increase our social care workforce to ensure caseloads for staff within the service are manageable.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will be asked to approve the proposed revisions to the Fostering Service for implementation from April 2022.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr Russell - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
<b>Date added</b>	4 January 2022
<b>Month</b>	March 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	All Foster Carers and Fostering Service staff via Task and Finish groups. Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee - 9 March  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Daniel Ruaux Tel: 033 022 22695
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

## Learning and Skills

### Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

#### Phase 2 Special Support Centre Programme - Edward Bryant Primary School, Bognor Regis - Allocation of Funding for Project Delivery

There is a need to increase provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) through the creation of additional places in Specialist Support Centres that are attached to mainstream schools and academies. This will assist with the aim of enabling children to attend school locally.

In December 2019 Cabinet approved the proposal to develop Phase two of the project for opening additional Special Support Centres in accordance with capital governance processes (decision reference [CAB03\(19/20\)](#)). In October 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of design fees to progress 6 of the Special Support Centres including Edward Bryant Primary School ([Decision reference ES09\(20/21\)](#))

Since that approval further design work has been undertaken and costed in relation to the Special Support Centre at Edward Bryant Primary School in Bognor Regis.

The Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of capital funding from the Capital Programme to enable the project to create a Special Support Centre at Edward Bryant Primary School to proceed.

<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills
<b>Date added</b>	1 February 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES09(20/21)
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Director of Property and Assets

#### Award of contract for the expansion of Palatine Primary School

Palatine Primary School in Worthing caters for a wide range of Special Educational Needs for children aged between 2 and 11 with moderate, severe or profound learning needs.

Following a review of existing and projected numbers on roll, the need for capital investment in the school was identified to meet an increase in pupils from 153 to 177. As part of a separate key decision process the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of capital funding from the Basic Need Capital Programme to provide additional accommodation at Palatine Primary School. The Cabinet Member also

delegated authority to the Director of Property and Assets to award the contract for the expansion project (decision [ES13\(20/21\)](#) refers).

Further to this delegation of authority from the Cabinet Member, the Director of Property and Assets will be asked to approve the award of contract for the expansion of Palatine Primary School.

<b>Decision by</b>	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
<b>Date added</b>	4 January 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Procurement Legal Finance  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES13(20/21)
<b>Author</b>	Paul Hemming Tel: 033 022 23519
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders - Tel: 033 022 22553

### Director of Education and Skills

<b>Contract Extension for the Provision of Adult Community Education</b>	
<p>West Sussex County Council currently provides adult community education for the residents of West Sussex through a subcontracting model, predominantly delivered by Aspire Sussex Ltd (Aspire). Provision is entirely externally funded via the Department for Education through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and where appropriate, fees paid by the learners. The County Council is accountable to the ESFA for the use of the funding and to Ofsted for the quality and effectiveness of provision.</p> <p>Aspire were awarded a contract on an initial three-year term, commencing 1 August 2017, with the option for up to a four-year extension.</p> <p>In April 2020, a two-year contract extension was approved which runs until August 2022 (decision <a href="#">OKD01(20/21)</a> refers); the contract value is approximately £2.74m per year. The intention is to extend the contract for the final two years; taking up this extension will allow the County Council to explore future delivery models.</p> <p>The Director of Education and Skills will be asked to approve the extension of the contract with Aspire for the final two years, to 31 August 2024, with a break clause in for August 2023.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Paul Wagstaff - Director of Education and Skills
<b>Date added</b>	23 June 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022

<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Education and Skills, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Officer Key Decision to extend the contract OKD01(20/21)
<b>Author</b>	Andrew Bishop Tel: 033 022 25399
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

**Director of Property and Assets**

<b>Award of contract for works to expand Lindfield Primary Academy, Haywards Heath</b>	
<p>Following a review of pupil projections for the North of the County and in particular the Haywards Heath/Lindfield areas it is necessary to provide for a bulge class of 30 pupils at Lindfield Primary Academy for the next two years' intake – 2023 and 2024.</p> <p>It is proposed to expand the school by creating 2 additional classrooms as an extension to the existing school buildings. In addition, a grass bank will be levelled into an outdoor play space to accommodate the increased pupil numbers.</p> <p>In November 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of Section 106 funding for education infrastructure capital projects, including the expansion of Lindfield Primary (<a href="#">decision ES10 (20/21)</a> refers). As part of the decision the Cabinet Member also delegated authority to the Director of Property and Assets to undertake a procurement exercise and to enter into contracts for delivery of the projects. At the time of this decision it was not considered that an individual project would require an allocation in excess of £500,000; following a feasibility study the works required at Lindfield Primary are anticipated to exceed this value, meeting the criteria for an individual officer key decision.</p> <p>The Director of Property and Assets will be asked to approve the award of contract for the expansion project.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
<b>Date added</b>	21 October 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>Procurement Legal Finance</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision

<b>Author</b>	Katerina Evans-Makrakis Tel: 07597 526870
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

#### **Burgess Hill Northern Arc - New Secondary School - Allocation of Capital Funding for Enabling Works**

Homes England has secured planning permission for a new 3500 home development on land known as the Northern Arc of Burgess Hill. As part of the overall plan, a site for a new Secondary School has been provided to ensure sufficient secondary school places to serve the development. In addition, a financial contribution of £18m has been secured through a Section 106 Agreement to contribute towards the construction costs of the new school. The school is proposed to open in September 2024.

All Year 7 places at local Secondary Schools are full for September 2021. A new Secondary School is therefore required to provide for both the increasing population in the area and the additional need generated by the development.

In July 2021 the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills approved the capital funding to enable the detailed design for building the new school to be progressed through the County Council's Multi-Disciplinary Consultant (MDC), Faithful+Gould Ltd ([decision LS03\(21/22\)](#) refers). The detailed design will enable the procurement process for construction of the school to be commenced.

The Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills will be asked to approve:-

- (1) The commencement of a procurement exercise for appointment of a building contractor
- (2) The allocation of funds required to enter into a pre-construction services agreement and enabling works package and
- (3) The delegation of authority to the Director of Property and Assets to award the contract for pre-construction services and enabling works and the submission of a reserved matters planning application.

<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills
<b>Date added</b>	30 July 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision Report LS03(21/22)
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

#### **Midhurst Rother College, Midhurst - Extension of Changing Rooms - Allocation of Capital Funding for Project Delivery**

## Agenda Item 7

Midhurst Rother College is an Academy Secondary School providing education for pupils aged 11 to 18 in the Midhurst/Petworth and surrounding areas.

Following an increase in parental preference and a need for Secondary places in the area, the Published Admission Number (PAN) for each year group at the school will be increased to 240. Consequently the changing rooms need expanding to accommodate the increased number of pupils.

In March 2021 the Director of Property and Assets approved the capital funding to enable the detailed design for the additional changing rooms to be progressed through the County Council's Multi-Disciplinary Consultant (MDC), Faithful+Gould Ltd.

The Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills will be asked to approve:

- the allocation of the funds required for full delivery of the project
- the procurement of a building contractor to construct the extension to the changing rooms and the
- delegation of authority to the Director of Property and Assets to award the contract.

<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills
<b>Date added</b>	1 November 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Schools, parents and local residents, Parish and District Councils Procurement Legal Finance  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Director of Property and Assets

#### **Allocation of S106 Funding for Additional Accommodation at St Philip Howard Catholic Voluntary Academy, Barnham**

St Philip Howard Catholic Voluntary Academy is a 6 form entry Secondary School with a Sixth form. The school has grown in recent years to meet the demand for places which has led to the requirement for more teaching and administrative space, as well as washroom facilities. The school has continued to take additional children over and above their Published Admission Number (PAN) and projections indicate an ongoing need for the additional places created.

The school is proposing to deliver a new teaching block incorporating 8 classrooms, office space, toilets and a lift for disabled access. Section 106 funds have been received totalling £970,000 which must be spent on additional educational infrastructure and/or



equipment at St Philip Howard Catholic Voluntary Academy and will assist with funding this development.

Following detailed design and associated cost estimates provided by the school, the Director of Property and Assets will be asked to approve the allocation of the S106 funds to the school to enable the project to proceed.

<b>Decision by</b>	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
<b>Date added</b>	18 November 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Graham Olway Tel: 033 022 23029
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

#### **Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills**

##### **Proposed Expansion of Yapton CE Primary School - Allocation of Design Fees**

The County Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient primary and secondary school places for all children who need a place. The Basic Need requirements are reviewed annually to identify the next tranches of projects and to ensure planned projects are still required following review of projection data of pupil numbers. The requirements across the county are set out in the annual update of the [Planning School Places document](#).

Pupil projections for the Barnham/Westergate planning area are indicating there are insufficient places for children starting school which is in part due to the significant house building across the area. The County Council are often unable to offer local places to movers into the area outside of the annual admissions round as all schools are full. It is therefore proposed that Yapton CE Primary School is expanded from 1.5 form entry (FE) (315 places) to 2FE (420 places) to meet the current demand for places. Additional land has been secured through a S106 Agreement to support the expansion of the school.

Following conclusion of a feasibility study to consider how best to expand the school to meet Department for Education (DfE) and West Sussex guidelines for school accommodation, further design work is now required to develop an expansion project that will meet the overall programme for delivery of places by 2024.

The Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of funds to enable the design work to commence.

<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills
<b>Date added</b>	24 November 2021

Agenda Item 7

<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	School Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

**Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills**

<b>School Funding 2022/23</b>	
<p>West Sussex County Council is required, under national funding regulations, to consult schools and the Schools Forum on proposed changes to funding arrangements affecting mainstream school budgets. The <a href="#">School Funding Review 2022/23 consultation document</a> was published on 20th October 2021. Responses to the consultation and feedback from Schools Forum have been taken into account in the development of the local funding formula for mainstream schools in 2022/23.</p> <p>To help fund the DSG recovery plan a proposal to transfer £1.2m of funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools block to the DSG High Needs Block was also included as part of the schools funding consultation. Under the funding regulations, any transfer between blocks is a decision that is taken by Schools Forum, although the County Council can seek to overturn this by applying to the Secretary of State for Education through a disapplication request.</p> <p>Following consideration of the responses to the consultation and the feedback from Schools Forum the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills will be asked to approve the 2022/23 local funding formula for all mainstream schools in the county.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills
<b>Date added</b>	24 November 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Schools Forum – 25th November 2021 Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	School Funding Consultation Document
<b>Author</b>	Andy Thorne Tel: 03302223349

<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553
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### Director of Property and Assets

#### **Award of contract to provide permanent accommodation for the expansion of River Beach Primary School, Littlehampton**

River Beach Primary School is a 3 form of entry Academy located in Littlehampton. Due to increased pupil population in Littlehampton, the school currently accommodates an increased intake of 30 pupils by using a 35+ year old modular unit that has reached the end of its life.

In November 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of Section 106 funding for education infrastructure capital projects, including the expansion of River Beach ([decision ES10 \(20/21\)](#) refers). As part of the decision the Cabinet Member also delegated authority to the Director of Property and Assets to undertake a procurement exercise and to enter into contracts for delivery of the projects. At the time of this decision it was not considered that an individual project would require an allocation in excess of £500,000; following a feasibility study the works required at River Beach are anticipated to exceed this value, meeting the criteria for an individual officer key decision.

The Director of Property and Assets will be asked to approve the award of contract for the expansion of River Beach Primary School.

<b>Decision by</b>	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
<b>Date added</b>	18 June 2021
<b>Month</b>	January 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Procurement Legal Finance  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES10(20/21)
<b>Author</b>	Paul Hemming Tel: 033 022 23519
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Director of Property and Assets

#### **Additional Budget Requirement to expand Lindfield Primary Academy, Haywards Heath.**

Following a review of pupil projections for the North of the County and in particular the Haywards Heath/Lindfield areas it is necessary to provide for a bulge class of 30 pupils at Lindfield Primary Academy for two years' intake.

The project will create 2 additional classrooms as an extension to the existing school buildings and a grass bank will be levelled into an outdoor play space to accommodate the increased pupil numbers.

In November 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of Section 106 funding for education infrastructure capital projects, including the expansion of Lindfield Primary (decision [ES10 \(20/21\)](#) refers). As part of the decision the Cabinet Member also delegated authority to the Director of Property and Assets to undertake a procurement exercise and to enter into contracts for delivery of the projects.

Following completion of the feasibility study, it has been identified that an increase to the budget is required in line with the most recent cost estimate to ensure contingencies are incorporated to make provision for current fluctuations in the market. This increase means the allocation of funding for this project now meets the criteria for a key decision; the additional monies will be allocated from S106 funds.

The Director of Property and Assets will be asked to approve the additional budget required for the expansion project at Lindfield Primary School.

<b>Decision by</b>	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
<b>Date added</b>	8 December 2021
<b>Month</b>	February 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES10 (20/21)
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

**Director of Property and Assets**

**Award of contract for construction of an All Weather Pitch at The Forest School, Horsham**

In July 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the siting of additional accommodation for QEII School on some of the existing playing field at The Forest School (Decision reference [ES02\(20/21\)](#)). In order to mitigate the impact of the loss of the playing field an All Weather Pitch will be constructed at The Forest School.

The All-Weather pitch will enable pupils to undertake outside sport activities all year round whilst also providing the school the ability to generate additional income through letting.

As part of a separate key decision process the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills approved the allocation of capital funding from Section 106 contributions to undertake a

project to provide an All Weather Pitch at The Forest School ([Decision LS05\(21/22\)](#) refers). The Cabinet Member also delegated authority to the Director of Property and Assets to award the contract for the project.

The Director of Property and Assets will be asked to approve the award of contract for the proposed project at The Forest School.

<b>Decision by</b>	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
<b>Date added</b>	11 January 2021
<b>Month</b>	February 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Procurement Legal Finance  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets, via the contact officer, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Liam Hayward Tel: 033 022 22002
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

#### **Director of Education and Skills**

##### **Award of contract for a Replacement Schools Information and Financial Management System**

A School Information Management system (SIMS) provides the information necessary to manage a school effectively and provides an objective system for recording and aggregating information to support its operations. A school also has a Financial Management System (FMS) to manage its finances and budgeting.

The current versions of these systems have been in place for a considerable time and are consequently not deemed by the users as being as flexible or in tune with current data requirements as more modern systems, which also potentially offer improved functionality options that would support more efficient and effective working practices, which could benefit both schools and the County Council.

The Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills has approved the commencement of a procurement process to seek a supplier to provide a replacement information and financial management system for all West Sussex maintained schools and to settle a service level agreement through which schools would reimburse the County Council for the costs of the system ([decision LS11 \(21/22\)](#) refers).

As part of the decision the Cabinet Member also delegated authority to the Director of Education and Skills to award the contract. Therefore, on completion of the procurement process, the Director of Education and Skills will be asked to approve the contract award to the successful bidder/s.

Agenda Item 7

<b>Decision by</b>	Paul Wagstaff - Director of Education and Skills
<b>Date added</b>	8 December 2021
<b>Month</b>	February 2022
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>Finance Legal IT Procurement</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Education and Skills via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision LS11(21/22)
<b>Author</b>	James Richardson Tel: 033 022 22327
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553